HOW TO INCREASE YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL

By Harry C. Munro

Presented to
United
Theological Seminary
Library
Dayton, Ohio

by

Dr. Chas. W. Brewbaker

C. W. Brewbaker
Dayton, Ohio

HOW TO INCREASE YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL

By HARRY C. MUNRO

, 1890 -

LIBRARY OF
United Theological Seminary
BV
1520
M967
1929
51,711

THE BETHANY PRESS
BEAUMONT AND PINE STREETS
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

COPYRIGHT, 1926, BY THE BETHANY PRESS

Printed in the United States

TO

THE OFFICERS AND TEACHERS

IN THE

SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF AMERICA

THAT NOBLE FRATERNITY OF IDEALISTS WHO
RENDER ON BEHALF OF THE KINGDOM OF
GOD A VOLUME OF VOLUNTARY
SERVICE GREATER THAN
THAT OF ALL OTHER CHRISTIANS COMBINED
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	Author's Foreword	7
	Introduction	9
I.	When Is a School Not a School?	15
II.	What Educational Output Do You Want?	25
III.	What Is Religion For?	43
IV.	Measuring Teaching Efficiency	53
V.	What Graded Lesson Tests Reveal	64
VI.	The Trouble Finder	82
VII.	The Fundamental Factor	91
VIII.	Was the Teaching of Jesus One Hundred Per Cent Efficient?	98
IX.	How to Fool Yourself	106
X.	A Plan Which Cannot Fail	121
XI.	How to Double Teaching Efficiency	133
XII.	Should Sunday School Teachers Be Paid?	144
XIII.	What the Church Owes Her Teachers	155
XIV.	Expanding the Program	165
XV.	Buying Up the Future	175

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

It is said that a cottage standing on the southernmost point of England bears a signboard which on one side reads, "The First House in England," and on the other side, "The Last House in England." One's point of view makes a vast difference.

An entirely new point of view is rapidly developing in Church school work. Instead of talking about "running a Sunday school," we are beginning to speak in terms of real religious education. Emphasis is shifting from the institution to the individual. Spiritual results rather than statistical records and reports are the conscious objective. We measure a school not only by the number present but by what happens in the life and experience of those who are present. We seek qualitative as well as quantitative results. This volume attempts to set out in simple popular form the issues involved in this shifting point of view. It is a clear challenge to all Church school leaders whether working in small schools or large, whether in city, town, or country, to accept a really educational point of view and to reconstruct their methods accordingly.

Much of this material has appeared in the columns of the *Front Rank* under the heading

"How to Increase Your Educational Output." Many commendations and requests from readers have resulted in its appearance in this more permanent and convenient form. Because of the serial form in which these chapters originally appeared there was necessarily some repetition of certain dominant ideas. For the sake of emphasis some of this reiteration has been allowed to stand.

It is the author's earnest hope and prayer that this simple message may help to shift the emphasis and clarify the thinking of Church school workers in the direction of a more adequate and spiritual product of their consecrated efforts.

H. C. M.

St. Louis, September, 1926.

INTRODUCTION

When the writer of this introduction entered the field of religious education as a director in the local church some thirteen years ago, our great Sunday schools were characterized by two things, namely: the amount of money given to missions and the ability to boom the attendance. Certain Sunday school publications were quick to capitalize on schemes for "whooping it up," and, as a result, the only test for measuring a great school was its numerical progress, missionary giving in many schools becoming secondary.

With the increasing number of professionally trained workers in religious education, the emphasis is changing and the outlook is most encouraging. The day is not far distant when a great school will not necessarily have to be looked upon as a large school. The rural or small town school can become great in the same sense as the school in the city. Numerical progress and missionary giving will always be looked upon as factors that contribute towards the greatness of any progressive Church school; but the real test of the outstanding school of the future will be its ability to train childhood and youth for efficient Christian living and service.

The author of this timely volume recognizes

the change that is gradually taking place in the Church school. He also appreciates the fact that the majority of schools are still obsessed with the idea that the desire for the big crowd should dominate. This is the real handicap that directors of religious education are having to face today. The average director is not adverse to having a large school; but he recognizes that before we can have numerical progress without sacrificing real educational values, we must first develop an efficient and effective teaching organization. Unfortunately churches expect quick results which are impossible. Because the new director does not start right in whooping things along, he is pronounced a failure. On the other hand when a church is willing to give the director time to effect a worth-while organization, numerical results will take care of themselves. It is well to remember that education is a slow process. Real Church schools cannot be made over night. They develop as the result of hard and systematic effort.

In this volume Mr. Munro has made a very definite contribution to the cause of religious education. He has presented some real problems and has suggested a practical way in which they may be solved. He presents many statements which coincide exactly with situations that are actually taking place. For example:

In a certain magazine of religious education

some months ago there appeared a thrilling account of a contest that had been waged between two midwestern schools. The story related particularly to the progress made by one of the schools involved. The article was headed with the caption, "Blank School Grows from 450 to 1250 in Six Weeks." The week following the close of the campaign this school which had occupied a prominent place among the "Ten Top Notchers" (ten largest schools in the brotherhood) had shrunk to less than 500. The attendance soon settled back to the normal gait. The story of the contest announced that 800 new members had been added during the special effort. With the slump back to the usual average the question is propounded: "What became of the 800?"

The superintendent of another school wrote a director of religious education in a neighboring city requesting the attendance report of the school with which the director was connected indicating that he desired to bring the comparative record of the two schools to the attention of his teachers and officers with the thought of inspiring them to greater achievements. He expressed enthusiasm over the fact that his school was often listed with the ten "great" schools of the brotherhood among the "Ten Top Notchers." This same church had recently completed a so-called educational building. While the plant was in the proc-

ess of construction, the chairman of the building committee was approached by a neighboring pastor who wanted to know how the building would be used, what departments, classes, etc., would occupy certain floors. The chairman of the committee replied, "We simply need more room and expect to decide how to use the building after it is completed." This church has since called a director of religious education and under the guidance of a wise pastor has settled down to a constructive type of work. But think of the problems which can never be overcome in such a building, inadequate and wholly unsuited for education. Under sane leadership the school is now growing and the children and young people are learning the art of Christian living, but under handicaps which could easily have been prevented if the right point of view had been gained earlier.

Another school changed officers. The new superintendent was a clever fellow, full of ideas and a continuous bubble of enthusiasm. He was looked upon throughout the community as a "Go-Getter." Shortly after he was made superintendent, he persuaded the school to engage in a so-called friendly contest with another school. This led from one campaign to another; but finally the contest idea wore off. Those who have been through these ventures know what happened. At the close of the last contest, the officers and teachers spent one entire evening discussing how to

hold those who had been brought in during the spasmodic drives. One of the officers emphasized that three classes were successfully holding the new members gained. Upon further investigation it was discovered that the teachers of these three classes were all trained. Not only had they been successful teachers in the public school system; but they had taken work in the Community School for Church school workers. These teachers had acquired by hard work and study the art of being able to grip and hold their pupils. After a further check, it was stated that other teachers in this particular Church school were simply marking time. They were incapable and manifested no desire for self-improvement. By their own experience the few interested leaders in this church came to realize that contests, campaigns, etc., could not be satisfactorily substituted for effective organization and teaching. As a result of the investigation, this school settled down to serious work. A real teaching body is being trained and maintained and the school is now growing faster than teachers can be supplied to meet the growing conditions. Here is another evidence that contests and attendance campaigns are not necessary in the building up of a school numerically. Efficient and effective teachers naturally attract childhood and youth. The same also applies to adults.

Let us look forward to the day when more Church schools will be willing to pay the price, settling down to a serious attempt to make the religious educational program of the church truly educational and worth while. When that time arrives we need have no fears about the church of the future. The boys and girls will become Christians in the most practical sense and they will be fitted for efficient and effective service. To that end this excellent and timely volume is a very definite contribution.

Abbott Book.

St. Louis, Mo.

CHAPTER 1

When Is a School Not a School?

The bigger the better?—

THE true measure of any institution is not its size but its service. It is not impossible for a very imposing and venerable institution to be quite worthless or even an actual menace to human welfare, if its objective has become mere size or self-perpetuation rather than an output of genuine serviceableness to humanity. A given church or Sunday school may thus become in reality the enemy of those whom she touches.

Judging by the only statistics kept and the only reports made by most Sunday schools, one might suppose mere size and numbers to be the main objective of the institution. The fallacy that a *big* school is a *good* school has prevailed so persistently that the major interest and energy of many officers and teachers is given to drumming up new members, stimulating attendance by one scheme or another, and keeping the machinery going by which this year's reports can be kept ahead of those of last year. The supreme object has been attained if by one Herculean effort "our school" can be reported among the "upper ten" of the brotherhood, or the "largest in town," or as "breaking all previous records."

A moving picture show, a circus, or a prize fight may draw a larger attendance than a teacher training class. This does not mean that the former is socially the more useful. Where influence for good is lacking or actually counteracted by negative values, the larger the numbers reached the greater the harm done. For this reason, a Christian social order cannot afford to tolerate some types of institutions even though they draw enormous numbers of people.

"But surely," you say, "no Sunday school, even though it emphasize no other objective than numbers, is to be compared in educational output with a prize fight or a circus."

Two bona fide personal experiences! As a child I once attended a Sunday afternoon Sunday school conducted at a summer resort and fostered by a very widely known and admired minister-evangelist. After adult-centered "opening exercises" the children, including myself, were herded into a tent, counted, subjected to a collection, and then entertained by a fascinating story-teller. I remembered her words and smile, and especially the word pictures she painted, long after I had forgotten most of the lessons learned during the same period of my life under my regular Sunday school teacher. The lesson we had that afternoon consisted of the thrilling and blood-curdling exploits of Jack the Giant Killer. This

was my first introduction to Jack. From that time on he became one of my regular heroes. Here was a school about which I would say unhesitatingly, "The larger it was the more harm it did." Yet it was reported in glowing terms as a great success. Success in what!

Many years later when I was better able to judge the religious educational value of influences to which I was being subjected I underwent an experience which I am forced to value at about the same level. I visited a great (?) Sunday morning men's class whose objective I will leave you to judge, but whose impression upon me I cannot withhold.

It was a special day. There were jazz bands, prominent visitors, special stunts, and much good-natured banter. The publicity committee had "done itself proud." There were large delegations of visitors from far and near. Here was the acme of a "whoop-'er-up" program. From the opening "sing" of the "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here" variety to the break up in a universal handshake, everyone had a good time. How those fellows did enjoy one another! Particularly how they did vie in pulling the cleverest stunt or telling the funniest story.

I will be fair. There was a brief prayer and a special number of sacred music but I remember some of the banter of the speakers and stunts

of the special delegations much more vividly. They *were* more vivid. The program lasted an hour and a half. During those ninety minutes not so much as five were taken for the delivery of a clear-cut, straight-from-the-shoulder religious message. I had gone there hoping to discover the secret of the magnetic power by which a great teacher was able to draw and hold masses of men to hear the message through him of the Greatest Teacher. I went away sick at heart.

This was, in a sense, a demonstration day. Many leaders of men were present to "see how it was done." I had hoped to see demonstrated the power of the religious ideal of Jesus over the hearts of a multitude of modern American men. I saw what appeared to be a stupendous mutual admiration society in session extraordinary. Thinking that I was going to be taught, I found myself viewing a parade. The climax of the program was reached when it was announced amidst wild applause that there were something over twenty-three hundred men present! So much the worse, if the impressions made on me were general.

I will not deny that such a group of men as the above, so organized, may become a powerful social and civic force. I raise no question as to the legitimacy of such a gathering or such a program. I trust that I have no jealousy of the en-

joyable fellowship of the members of such a group or the wide influence of its leadership. The question raised here is the same as that raised regarding the "Jack the Giant Killer" program. Is the genuine religious educational output of such a program to be compared with that of a very different type of program which may involve much smaller numbers?

I am not implying that the above is a typical program. It was merely a demonstration session of the "class." Perhaps it was as true to the facts as most demonstrations. I regret that it was the only time I ever had an opportunity to attend that particular "class." Those in charge of that day's program are responsible for the impression which it made upon me. Hundreds of others were present in that class that day for the first and last time. Those who had no religious educational ideals by which to judge the performance may have approved the whole program. More's the pity.

What disheartens me is that so many teachers of men's classes, so many Sunday school superintendents, and so many ministers among the most "successful" leaders have as the ideal toward which they work, the pattern of the above described "class" rather than the pattern of a group of thirteen men of long ago who never used a brass band or promoted an attendance cam-

paign, but one of whom the world reverently calls the Great Teacher.

What am I trying to do?—

What is my Sunday school or my class, or what am I as the teacher, seeking to do? What is the educational output I am seeking? How shall I measure the results of my efforts? How shall I distinguish success from failure? Answers to these questions determine the answer to the question, "When is a school not a school?"

Numbers do count—

Crowds usually assemble at the call of some great life interest. It may be a dog fight, a fire, or a food show. Whatever draws numbers is at least interesting. Religion is one of the most interesting factors in human life. When it is vital and real and thus related to everyday experiences and problems, it is sure to be attractive. Great religious teaching or preaching is bound to draw crowds. Moving picture shows, horse races, and bull fights also attract crowds by cheaper and more cheapening means. The church may likewise make these more cheapening appeals. Merely to be interesting is not enough any more than it is enough merely to be pious and peddle sanctimonious platitudes.

A religious teacher who thinks only of "getting the crowds" or of "holding the interest"

of his group is almost certain sooner or later to find himself adopting unworthy means.

Two extremes—

"I wish you would come in and talk to my boys for a while today," said the teacher of a Senior class to a visitor.

"What lessons are you using?" asked the visitor.

"We are supposed to be using the second year Senior Graded Lessons, but the boys are much more interested in some other things so I usually spend the hour talking to them about basket ball or some other kind of athletics. They seem to be much more interested in those things than they are in the lessons, and my main object is to hold their interest and keep the gang together. I am about the first teacher who has yet been able to do that," was the reply.

The visitor entered the class and found a fine typical cross section of young America "rarin' to go." Unwilling merely to talk about basket ball or some other thing which could qualify merely because it was interesting, the visitor picked up the quarterly and found that the lesson which should have been dealt with for the day was on the subject "Christian Liberty," or "Freedom Through Obedience." Three or four questions and a concrete problem or two were presented very simply and in three minutes every

fellow in the class was on his toes to get into the argument. It was soon evident that these fellows were interested as much in religion as they were in basket ball—that is when they saw that religion tied up with the problems of everyday life as faced in the high school, on the playground, and on the athletic floor.

Here was a teacher who knew how to interest boys and hold them but was unable to make the connection either for the boys or for himself between those entrancing interests of everyday life and the religion of Jesus. In teaching a course on "Problems of Christian Living," it was so uninteresting that the time was spent discussing athletics instead! This was "holding the crowd" all right, but to what purpose?

The visitor found an illustration of the opposite extreme in the same town as is evidenced by the following conversation with the teacher of a class of senior high school girls. The course being used by this class is one which is organized around the major project of choosing a life work from genuine Christian motives. Christian ideals are made concrete throughout the course by the presentation of many typical problems.

"How do you like the course?"

"I do not like it. It does not have near enough Bible in it. I think we should teach nothing but the Bible. That is what the Bible school is for."

"How do your pupils like it?"

"Oh, they think it is fine. They take great interest in it and are working very well. They enjoy doing the home work."

"What else do you dislike about the course?"

"It contains references to the moving picture show, to business and professional life, to current magazines and books, which are not in the Bible and do not help one to understand the Bible. I do not think such things have any place in a course for the Bible school."

"Anything else?"

"Yes, I do not like those problems. Some of them I hardly know how to answer myself."

"Do the students like them?"

"Oh, yes, they get to discussing those problems and I can't get them *back on the lesson.*"

"When you can get a group of boys and girls to discussing the moral, social, and religious problems of their lives under Christian leadership and in the light of Christian ideals, what more do you want?"

"I want to teach the Bible."

Here was a teacher who cared far less about the everyday life and experiences of her pupils than she did about getting certain biblical materials and facts into their minds. Unquestionably she hoped that this Bible knowledge would Christianize all the relationships of their lives, but

she thought of the teacher of religion as being limited to the communication of this biblical material.

These two illustrations show that it is possible for teachers to take graded lessons which have a clearly defined statement of aim for the entire course and also a statement of aim for each lesson, which are primarily centered in the religious life and experience of the pupils, and yet to proceed practically without reference to those aims.

When is a school not a school? The answer to our question depends altogether upon a clear definition of genuine educational objectives and continuous procedure in the direction of those objectives. In solving the problem, "How to increase your Sunday school" it is necessary that we define clearly what the Sunday school is for. What is to be its output? Increasing the real value and service of the Sunday school requires an increase in its educational output. An increase any where else which does not effect a net increase in the actual spiritual output of the Sunday school is deceiving and fruitless. Therefore, we must define just what output we want and how we are to measure it before we can bring about an increase.

CHAPTER 2

What Educational Output Do You Want?

A fair question—

WHAT output do you want? That's a fair question. If an engineer were employed to construct and equip a factory, his first question would naturally be, "What kind of a factory do you want? What are you going to produce? Do you want your factory to turn out automobile tires, tin cans, boots and shoes, rubber dolls, or clothespins?" Before he could even draft the blue prints he must know what the output is to be. Knowing exactly what it is that the owners wish their factory to produce, the architects can plan the building, locate the machinery, and construct the whole plant with this definite objective in view.

After the factory has been set up, the machinery installed, and the workmen employed, an efficiency expert will likely be called in to organize the processes and to perfect the methods so as to reduce the waste of time, materials, and effort. But before he can go to work he must know likewise exactly what the total output of the factory is to be. "Is the sole object quan-

tity production, or do you wish to establish a reputation for superior quality of product? Are dividends the sole ultimate end or are human values to be placed first and profits to be sacrificed when the two interests clash? Are you looking for quick returns or can you afford to keep the more distant future in view?" These are questions which the owners must answer before the efficiency expert can apply his skill and knowledge to accomplish their purposes.

"But," you say, "we are not running a factory. We are running a Sunday school." To be sure, but you are not running a Sunday school "just for your health" any more than your factory owner is running his factory for that purpose. You are investing effort, energy, time, and money in the Sunday school not just because you don't know what else to do with these assets, but because there are certain definite objectives or purposes that you wish to accomplish with them. Efficiency in the Sunday school is just as desirable as it is in the factory. In fact, if God has given us American people great organizing and administrative ability, it is a shame for us to use it in our everyday life and work, and then when it comes to the work of God's Kingdom to lay aside efficiency and simply become slipshod and haphazard. If we are to have efficiency in the Church school, it is just as necessary that we

make a clear definition of our aims here as anywhere else.

Spiritual engineering—

The religious educator, be he superintendent, director, pastor, teacher, or officer is a "spiritual engineer." More and more religion is coming to be recognized as one of the main driving forces of human life. An eminent sociologist* after a lifetime of study and research in social problems and methods tells us that the only hope for the solution of our present-day social problems is in a thoroughgoing application of the religion of Jesus to our social life. It was once felt that the science of psychology might possibly prove that religion as such had no necessary and real place in human life. But more and more of late years psychologists have come to see that one of the greatest and most constant forces with which they have to deal in the life of the normal individual is religion. Leaders in the field of public education in facing the great problems of conduct and morality in the public schools of America are coming increasingly to feel that religion must be given a real and vital place in education, if our public schools are not to become a dismal disappointment to us in the real product which they are turning out.

*Dr. Charles A. Ellwood, Professor of Sociology, University of Missouri.

It is clear that those who are working effectively at the great task of religious education are really laying the very foundations of society and of all moral progress. No more significant contribution is being made to human welfare by any one else than by them. If the Sunday school actually holds such a large place in social and individual development, it is highly important that those engaged in Sunday school work know just what it is that they are about.

To be sure, it will be impossible to measure the desired output of a Sunday school with the same accuracy and in the same concrete way as the output of a shoe factory, a market garden, or a stock farm is measured. The desired results of Christian education are less tangible and concrete, materially. Our instruments or means for measuring spiritual results are far less perfect than are the means by which we measure material things. For this very reason it is all the more important that the outcomes which are desired shall be definitely foreseen, that they shall be clearly defined and thoroughly recognizable. Results which must be measured in terms of spiritual growth, of enriched personality, and of goodwill and service toward one's fellow men, may be difficult to measure accurately but they are none the less real. In fact, in the last analysis probably these results are far more real and cer-

tainly more permanent than the material products of any industry. If we believe that the Sunday school should have a genuine educational output which is both real and measurable, certainly we are responsible for defining clearly just what that output is and for judging the success or failure of our work. And that not by any artificial or superficial measure such as mere attendance, but according to the actual results which such an important institution should be yielding. Therefore, it is of first importance that we answer the question, "What educational output do you want?"

The number craze—

Some schools seem to measure success only by numbers. The aim for the year will be defined solely in terms of a certain average attendance. The "greatest day" will be the one with the highest attendance record. If there are more present today than last Sunday and a big gain over last year, the superintendent and all concerned pat themselves on the back. Their efforts are being crowned with "success." If the attendance is a little "off" it is the occasion for lamentation and for seeking some new device to "bring the school back up to normal." A whirlwind attendance campaign may be conducted which will monopolize the time, effort, and attention of teachers and pupils alike, but if it results in

breaking all previous records, in having the largest Sunday school in town, in winning the contest, or in getting into that sacred circle of the ten "top notchers" every one is jubilant. The supreme object of consecrated effort will have been reached.

It certainly must have been a peculiar notion which led a certain teacher of long ago to forsake the multitudes and seek a quiet retreat where he could talk informally with a dozen friends. Perhaps this indifference to numbers was a mere whim of his, but in spite of it he really had considerable influence. He may have been a rather indifferent promoter but he is frequently called the Great Teacher.

Of course, numbers do count. But they are a means, never an end. Whenever a Sunday school measures success only in terms of numbers, it is forsaking its real task. It is forfeiting its right to Christian support. It is endangering its spiritual mission. If numbers come as a by-product of the educational fitness and winsome Christian personality of a corps of officers and teachers, well and good. If they come as a result of high pressure attendance campaigns when worship is replaced by "whoop-'er-up" jazz-pep, and teaching by class-roll promotion, then the Sunday school has bargained away its birthright for a mess of pottage. There are always some mate-

rialistic Esaus who are willing to make such a poor bargain. Let us put numbers last rather than first among worthy objectives!

While some "top notcher" superintendent is telegraphing his record smashing report and thereby "receiving his reward," a quiet, unassuming teacher in an unheard of little school is leading forth into full Christian personality a handful of youngsters whose lives and service are destined to become the real coin of the Kingdom. These results can happen in a large school as well as in a small one, but they are not likely to occur where the conscious aim is defined chiefly in attendance statistics. We are not likely to get a better product than that for which we aim.

Extreme and almost exclusive emphasis upon numbers has been given a fair trial in the American Sunday school. For years it was the dominant emphasis. Yet with what results? Sooner or later nearly every one is caught in the attendance net. Only a fraction of those who have been induced to try the Sunday school have been permanently held in its membership by the attendance propaganda. Here and there emphasis on numbers, together with clever devices for enforcing attendance pressure have built up large schools. In few communities, however, has this emphasis permanently reached any large proportion of the population. Even if mere numbers

were a legitimate objective, many other institutions outstrip the Sunday school in the success with which they attain it.

It is possible for a Sunday school which emphasizes and measures nothing else but its attendance thus to do much harm. While attendance may hold up or even increase year after year, indicating "success," the student body may actually be merely a procession maintained by vigorous attendance drives but leaving in its wake hosts of young people who are permanently lost to the church and indifferent to Christianity. Gathered into the ranks of this school by attendance pressure, only to find its actual teaching and program too weak and devitalized to challenge and hold them, they drop out as soon as the edge of the attendance pressure is dulled, and remain thereafter largely immune to the appeal of that or any other kind of a Sunday school.

While but a small proportion of the Protestant people in a typical American community actually attend church and Sunday school regularly, the vast majority of them have at some time, perhaps only briefly, been more or less regular in their attendance. The immunizing influence of some inefficient Sunday school has more or less permanently forfeited the church's appeal to hosts of them. The Sunday school which solicits at-

tendance and increased enrollment assumes a heavy obligation to provide the kind of teaching and program which will prevent this disastrous but all too prevalent outcome. In spite of this obligation, many schools and even some journals "of Christian education" continue to emphasize attendance statistics almost exclusively. Such emphasis is typical of the Sunday school of the past and accounts for its appalling degree of failure.

Teaching the Bible versus teaching pupils— If not numbers, what then? Bible knowledge and doctrinal soundness are possible aims. Certainly they are worthy concerns of the teacher. But here again are we not dealing with means rather than with real ends or objectives? Why should one know the Bible? Why should he understand true Christian doctrine? Not that the Bible or the truth needs him particularly. The future of the Bible and the future of Christian truth revealed therein do not depend solely upon the knowledge and attitude of any individual or of any group. But the future of that individual or group does depend tremendously upon the attitude taken toward, and the knowledge gained of, the Bible and Christian truth! The real objective is not so much concerned then with the Bible and doctrine as with the life and development of an individual and a group. Bible

knowledge and Christian doctrine may be a means and an indispensable means, but they are never quite the real end and objective of the Christian teacher. The real end may be obtained in part through these means, but they are not that real end. Bible knowledge and doctrinal soundness may be accompanied by a social attitude and a personal spirit which are quite contrary to the spirit and attitude of Jesus.

There is no doubt, however, that for many years the most conscious aim of a large proportion of Sunday school teachers and workers has been Bible knowledge. In spite of this emphasis, the average Sunday school class of adults, many of whom have been in Sunday school for years, contains few who have any but an attitude of confessed helplessness and ignorance with regard to using the Bible in an intelligent way, and with regard to the most common biblical facts.

The *Indiana Survey** reveals an astounding lack of knowledge of simple biblical facts on the part of Sunday school pupils. If the public schools had been no more successful in their task than the Sunday school has been in its task, illiteracy would be widely prevalent, mere ability to read and write would be unusual, mastery of the common facts of history exceptional; and progress

**The Indiana Survey,* Volume II, Walter S. Athearn.

beyond the early elementary grades would have been made only in rare cases!

A number of simple tests over biblical facts given high school pupils and college freshmen indicate appalling failure on the part of the Sunday school even to impart Bible knowledge. Typical of these tests is that conducted by the Virginia Sunday School Association. Twenty questions of common Bible knowledge made up the test. "Who was the father of the Hebrew race?" "Who was the first king of the Hebrew nation?" "In what village or city was Jesus born?" "Who was the mother of Jesus?" "How many books make up our Bible?" These are typical of the questions. The test was given in 213 high schools over the state to a large number of students. In the returns 18,424 test sheets were tabulated. The average grade was 46 per cent! In many rural schools the average was less than 30 per cent.

But the most serious aspect of this test is the comparatively small difference which the habit of Sunday school attendance seems to have made. The 12,006 students who stated that they attend Sunday school regularly made a grade of only 51 per cent, 5 higher than the average. The 3,798 who stated that they attend half of the time made an average of 39 per cent, those who stated that they seldom attend made an average grade

of 35 per cent, while those who stated that they never attend Sunday school averaged 32 per cent. The difference between attending Sunday school regularly and never attending has made only the difference between 32 per cent and 51 per cent in Bible knowledge. When one considers the inevitable difference between the home environment and general social background of a boy or girl who attends Sunday school regularly and those of one who never attends, the Sunday school can scarcely claim credit for all of even this gain in Bible knowledge. It is evident that in realizing even the Bible knowledge aim the Sunday school has been a very ineffective teaching agency.

Church membership, success and failure—

Church membership is certainly a desirable outcome of Christian teaching, but here again we are dealing with a means rather than an end. The task of bringing in the Kingdom would be comparatively simple, if it were merely a matter of enrolling church members. This might seem to justify an emphasis on mere numbers which Jesus certainly never made, but beyond which many of his followers seldom look. Unless church membership issues in something beyond itself, it may be but a snare and a delusion.

Although church membership, in and of itself, is not an adequate ultimate aim or objective, it certainly is a convenient measure of the educa-

tional efficiency of a given school, especially if checked up with regard to its permanency. Christian teaching which does not usually result in church membership some time during later childhood or early adolescence, is not very effective teaching. Of course, it may lead to church membership without getting very far toward more ultimate and spiritual results, but certainly unless it does lead to church membership, these other results are not likely to be realized. If we found a Church school which was succeeding in getting most of its students permanently into church membership, we might want to enquire further as to the *quality* of that membership and the effectiveness of their Christian lives and service before rating that Church school as high in real educational output. On the other hand, if we found a school which lost a large proportion of its pupils without getting them permanently enlisted in church membership and service, we would be forced to rate its educational output as very low, solely upon that basis.

For instance, if of the twelve-year-old boys and girls who were in a given Sunday school ten years ago, a large proportion of them are today at the age of twenty-two, actively and effectively participating in church membership, we would rate the educational output of the school as in all probability, very good. If, however, we should

find but few of them so engaged, we would be forced to admit a large degree of failure on the part of the school. Certainly the school which fails to relate those whom she enrolls, thus permanently to the program and life of the church fails at a most vital point. Perhaps she has actually injured her pupils and also the church by giving them such a weak and inadequate conception of the church and of Christianity itself that their permanent allegiance has not been secured.

"Eighty-five per cent of all church members come through the Sunday school." Sunday school leaders are in the habit of quoting this unverified statement as evidence of the marvelous efficiency of the Sunday school. Granting that it is not an over-statement, it rather reflects the ineffectiveness of any other method of recruitment than the adequacy of the Church school. The real question is not the percentage which comes through the Sunday school (as one contributing factor), but the percentage of her total enrollment which the Sunday school actually leads into effective church membership. Of the "raw material" which the Sunday school enrolls, what proportion is transformed by her educational-spiritual processes into vital, active church membership; what proportion is strewn along her wake as waste material which she was unable so to

transform? Here is the real test as to the church membership results.

The *Indiana Survey* shows that there are more boys and girls in Sunday school at the age of twelve than at any other age. This is also the approximate age at which the largest number join the church. The real test of Sunday school efficiency as to church membership is the proportion of these boys and girls who will become permanently enlisted in participating church membership.

The survey shows that about half of these twelve-year-olds are church members, and that within the next two years a considerable number more will become members. Those who do not unite with the church by the age of fourteen drop out in large numbers. After the fourteenth year both members and non-members steadily decrease until at the age of twenty-two, 90 per cent of the Sunday school enrollment is made up of church members. However the vast majority of those who were in the Sunday school at the age of twelve have been eliminated whether they became church members or not.

For example, for every twelve boys in Sunday school at the age of eleven, there are only nine at the age of fourteen, three at the age of eighteen, and one at the age of twenty-two. It has taken twelve, twelve-year-olds as "raw mate-

rial'' to produce one twenty-two-year-old ten years later who is a participating church and Sunday school member. Eleven were sacrificed by the wayside on the altar of Sunday school inefficiency. Two or three others may be nominal church members but even so the spiritual mortality has been appalling!

With girls the spiritual death-rate is not so high. Of eight twelve-year-olds seven are left at fourteen, three at eighteen and only one at twenty-two. This means that from this standpoint alone the Sunday school is losing nine out of ten of those whom it is reaching at the age of twelve. One hundred active participating church and Sunday school members at the age of twenty-two is the ''remnant'' of one thousand boys and girls with whom the Sunday school had her opportunity, but with nine hundred of whom she failed in this respect!

If this 10 per cent efficiency results in 85 per cent of our active church membership, what would a 50 per cent or 60 per cent efficiency mean in church membership? If we have one-tenth as many twenty-two-year-olds as we have twelve-year-olds, what would it mean to the manpower of the church and Sunday school if we had half as many or five times our present force of young adulthood? The possibilities in a religious edu-

cational program which will double or triple this present low efficiency are enough to challenge the imagination. But, of course, church membership alone is no adequate measure of results. Such a measure must be *qualitative* as well as *quantitative.*

"Getting religion"—

Ah, now we have it! Conversion is the great objective. We want people really to "get religion." If by "getting religion" you mean a process something like "getting the measles" or "catching a cold" you are wrong again. We are discussing an educational institution and presumably its product will be the result of educational processes. "Getting religion" will be a process akin to "getting" a personality or a character. It may have mountain tops where great experiences are encountered or great decisions are made. As a whole, however, it will consist in a gradual growth through educational processes. It will be under the nurture and guidance of a mature leader whose chief concern is with the spiritual growth process which is taking place, not with "counting noses" or with mere facts, memory work, formal instruction, or nominal church membership.

And now we must take another chapter in which to define what the real output of a reli-

gious educational institution should be. Suppose you close the book just here and, in the light of what has already been said, write out your own definition of the proper educational output of a Sunday school. You will be interested in comparing your own statement with that of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

What Is Religion For?

Such devotion must not be blind—

PROBABLY the most self-sacrificing and devoted body of people in America is composed of that vast army of volunteer teachers and officers who man our Sunday schools. They have been called by a noted educator, "America's greatest body of idealists." Serving without material pay or expectation of personal reward, they give unmeasured volumes of time and energy to the great cause of religious education, which more and more is seen to underlie, not only our personal, but our social and national welfare. In an age when Sunday is becoming increasingly a day of play and careless indulgence, they give much of it in loving service in order that the church may still exert her spiritualizing influence upon responsive youth.

These leaders render such devoted service not merely from habit, and not altogether from duty, but because they hope to see out of it come some definite and worth-while results. Indeed, the Sunday school costs far too much of time and effort to keep it going merely "to have a Sunday school." Unless it is actually delivering the

goods it may as well be closed up and the time and energy which it consumes be given to something worth while. More's the pity if this worthy devotion is given blindly to a venerable institution with no clear perception of its definite objectives.

What is religion for?—

A good question and timely. In this day of pragmatic philosophy and functional psychology we have little time for any institution or activity which does not perform some worthy function or service in life. We who have committed ourselves in discipleship to Jesus cite his command to teach as our authority. Granting to the full his rightful control over our lives, being such a leader as he is, he gave us no merely arbitrary commands. He was set dead against the purely arbitrary in religion and in favor of the reasonable and practical. Back of his command to teach lie certain objectives which he wished this teaching to accomplish in growing life. We have not fulfilled his command by merely mouthing over certain biblical and theological phrases. Only by clearly understanding his objectives or aims and committing ourselves to them have we begun to "teach" as he commanded. Jesus expected Christian nurture to accomplish very definite results, not primarily in institutions, but first in individual lives and personal relation-

ships. When these results are apparent we are really fulfilling his command.

Control of nature—

Religion has always been a means of control. Through primitive man it functions as his attempt to control his physical environment. Every object of nature has its religious significance. Every process of nature is controlled by spiritual (religious) powers and personalities. Sacrifice, idol worship, and all the mysterious performances of the medicine man are attempts to get on good terms with spirit forces which in turn will control natural phenomena such as rain, wind, fertility, and disease, in man's interest. Thus religion on its lowest level is man's attempt to control his environment through mysterious forces which he recognizes but cannot clearly define. Civilized man exerts a much more intelligent control over a part of these forces through his scientific knowledge. When he reaches the limits of this scientific control he submits to these forces, adjusting himself as best he can, and clearly recognizing that these natural forces are orderly and uniform in their operation, and are not under whimsical or arbitrary spiritual control.

Social control—

Religion on the lower levels of civilization becomes largely a means of social control. It is the powerful instrument of the ruling classes by

which they give the authority of sanctity and mystery to the regulations which seem to them best for society. In the hands of evil and unscrupulous leaders, religion may thus become a frightful menace to human welfare, as in the caste system of India, the Spanish Inquisition of the Medieval Church, the "divine right of kings" doctrine, or the Salem witchcraft craze. On the other hand, religion functions at its best as social control when its leadership is enlightened and their motives pure. It was by this means that Moses, encamped at Sinai with the motley array of escaped Hebrew serfs, was able to weld them into a people with definite ethical ideals and practices. Modern society will decay and disintegrate without the powerful sanctions of vital religion as a social bond and stabilizer. For example, probably the only way to save the American home from disintegration through the alarming increase of divorce is to surround marriage and the home more and more with the sanction of religion. The Christian teacher and preacher is not just in the business of "saving souls," snatching them as brands from the burning, but in the far larger work of making this earth the very Kingdom of God.

Control of all experience—

But this comes about through the highest functioning of religion. On its highest plane religion

becomes a means by which the individual brings his own experience and conduct under control; in the case of Christianity, under the control of the ideals of Jesus. Anything short of this is comparative failure.

To bring the individual into conformity with the beliefs and practices of a given institution—some particular church—is not enough. This is institutional control. This control in many historical instances has been atrocious in its effects on human welfare and true religion. It may become so again in the case of any modern church institution. The true teacher as a disciple of Jesus can never be satisfied with this as an ultimate goal. In fact, the most vigorous and wholesome religious life will often exert itself against institutional control rather than in accordance with it as in the cases of Luther, Wesley, Campbell, Paul, and, pre-eminently, Jesus himself. The teacher who develops as a result of his teaching efforts one such reasonable and creative heretic performs a greater religious service than he who develops a hundred fanatical stand-pat conformists.

To familiarize one's students with religious lore or "sacred" history, and to fill their minds with gems of religious literature is to perform for them an unquestionable service. This will doubtless be a contributing factor toward a

worthy objective. On the other hand, if thereby religion is made to consist for them simply of such lore and literary gems, their religious life and development is dangerously crippled since it may become isolated from its true field of action.

Similarly to train a "religious" attitude both for public worship and private devotions which identifies religion with these practices (and perhaps abstinence from a limited list of others), is dangerously to limit the field and scope of the religious life. These practices and performances are not religion. They are means by which religion is enabled to take hold of life and prepare for its true function—the enrichment and control of all human experience.

The real aim—

The teacher of the Christian religion, therefore, is seeking to bring into all the life and the total experience of his pupil, attitudes, ideas, values, and purposes which will fundamentally change his total personality, making him react to every situation of life and experience in a way peculiar to Christians. This involves a personal acquaintance with Jesus, and a consciousness of him as alive and participating in that pupil's personal affairs and social relationships. It demands a knowledge of what Jesus would likely do in the various problematic situations which the pupil faces. It requires a personal allegiance to Jesus

which will act as a powerful motive force not only in making Christian choices but in acting upon them consistently and courageously. It requires sufficient actual practice in living the Christian life that the more common Christian reactions become habitual and the more uncommon situations are faced naturally in the light of Christian ideals or values. It requires not only the development of a central and dominant life purpose, which is essentially Christian, but sufficient activity carried on in a dominantly Christian environment and atmosphere that the interests and activities of all of life will come to be polarized and organized around this central purpose.

It is quite obvious that this demands a much more elaborate program of Christian activities than the ordinary Sunday school has usually provided. And these activities must not merely be "expressional work" by which the "impressions" made by "instruction" are "carried over" into action and thereby become more firmly fixed by some fancied psychological process. No, no! That were quite an inadequate notion of practice in Christian living.

Typical Christian activities or enterprises full of pupil purpose and interest, started and carried to completion as largely as possible by pupil initiative with the teacher merely a guide, adviser,

and inspirer must become the *chief* and *central* means of Christian teaching, with instruction, training, drill, etc., as supplementary means and methods, never as objectives or as fundamental method.

Since the real objective then is "learning to live the Christian life through actual practice in typical Christian activity" a few questions will serve to test out your own procedure as to its effectiveness.

Ask yourself—

Purely as a result of my teaching or my school, how have the answers to the following questions been changed? What kind of neighbors are my pupils? Can they be trusted? Do they cheat in school? Do they hate the Negro or the Jap or the Catholic? Do they gossip and say unkind things? Are they selfish at home? Do they worry over trifles? Do they loaf at work? Do they bluff? Do they put on airs? Are they snobs? Do they harbor impure thoughts? Do they read salacious literature? Do they enjoy demoralizing shows? Do they give way to uncontrolled fits of anger?

Oh, yes, religion, at least the religion of Jesus, is concerned directly with these things. If you have defined the aim of your class or school without taking such matters as these into account, you are missing the real issue. Perhaps you are run-

ning a mere side show quite apart from the great arena of life where your work should center and where Jesus stands claiming the right of kingship.

Are my pupils actually rendering definite Christian service? Let me name several concrete examples: things they have done to make their public school life more Christian and wholesome; kindnesses rendered to those in need; friendship shown to those of other race and color; enterprises which brought good-will in the community; help given in their homes; co-operation in the larger service enterprises of the church. Let me list at least a dozen examples drawn from recent months which are a definite part of my own teaching program.

Let me now list half a dozen concrete examples from the recent experiences of my pupils showing that, as a result of my work or the work of my school, Jesus is becoming increasingly real as a friend and guide in their daily lives; that decisions such as choice of life work are being made in the light of ideals gained from him; that attitudes toward others are determined largely by what his would likely be. What evidence is there that worship to them is a *real* experience and not something artificial and merely imitative? Is there evidence that prayer likewise is real and natural with them, not merely a duty or pious "work of merit"? Under my leadership are my

students experiencing *growth* in their spiritual experience? By comparing recent observation with that of longer ago, what evidences are there in given individuals of such growth? What evidences of developing skill in leadership?

Granted that these are severe tests of your work, ponder them. Dare you be satisfied with any others?

CHAPTER 4

Measuring Teaching Efficiency

Why a means of testing work is needed—

RELIGION is life. The function at least of Christianity is to enrich daily experience and introduce control into conduct in terms of Jesus' ideals of living. Knowledge gained, habits acquired, ideals accepted in the process of religious education are all for the sake of more abundant life and richer Christian character expressing itself in love and service to all mankind, especially to those nearest where contacts are more intense.

Such a highly important outcome cannot be left to chance. It can only be assured by providing means which will bring it about. The teaching work of the church is a chief means. If this is being done efficiently, ultimate results can be confidently expected. If the weekly teaching session of the church is slovenly, hurried, or inefficient, neither the church nor society has any guarantee of sufficient cultivation of Christian character to safeguard the future.

Satisfactory educational output on the part of public schools is insured through the administration of well defined standards. Certain qualifications in general education and in special training

are required of the teachers and officers. The curriculum is prescribed, and the textbooks, authorized. Certain conditions as to time, equipment, and attendance must be met. With all these safeguards, a fairly constant output is promised, though even then results are sometimes disappointing. Wherever these standards are not met a prescribed, well-standardized examination is required for credit. Where other means of insuring output and measuring the work done are not available the test is used in measuring the efficiency of the school. It is customary also to supplement all these other standards even when they are present, by tests. Thus the standardized test is an important factor in any educational program. It is most important where there is lack of, or wide variety, in such standards as teaching conditions and teacher preparation. This makes it indispensable in religious education, since of all educational institutions Sunday schools are most lacking in standardized teaching conditions and teacher qualifications.

Let it be clearly understood that a test of knowledge gained, alone, is no adequate test of religious education. Even a test of moral judgment or choice in a hypothetical case may be no real guarantee of true religious educational output. However, it may be said emphatically that a school or teacher which is not securing knowl-

edge outcomes or judgment outcomes as a result of teaching is certainly not doing much teaching.

While, therefore, we may be unable as yet to measure scientifically the ultimate output of religious education, we can if we will, measure quite accurately the knowledge and choice or judgment outcomes and thereby determine with fair accuracy where good teaching is being done and where poor teaching is failing on the job.

It is highly important that Sunday schools generally adopt such means for measuring their work and discovering their greatest weaknesses. This is the simplest and most practical means at present for introducing a standardizing factor into the process. Of course other means of standardizing the work should be adopted also as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Absence of these makes the use of tests all the more imperative. It is to meet this need that Graded Lesson Tests have been devised by the writer and made available for all schools using the graded lessons of the Christian Board of Publication. This marks the beginning of a new epoch in religious education, an epoch in which church school work will begin to come under the same general standardization for credit and recognition as prevails in public education.

Such a plan has already been applied to the work of Standard Teacher Training. As soon

as it has passed the experimental stage, regular credits and diplomas may also be granted for standardized work in the regular Sunday school courses. Experience with teacher training has demonstrated that this is practical and expedient in the field of religious education. There is no reason why it should not come to prevail wherever genuinely educational work is being done in a local school. The basis for such credit will likely be a certain required percentage of attendance, a passing grade given by the local teacher on "participation" in class activities, and a required average standing in the Graded Lesson Tests.

What the tests are like—

In order that a test may be a real measure of teaching efficiency it must be administered everywhere alike. To this end Graded Lesson Tests are sent out to superintendents in sealed packages, labelled for each class. An absolute time limit is enforced. Neither teacher nor pupils see the test until the time of the examination. Of course if teachers had access to them beforehand, some consciously and others unconsciously would especially prepare the pupils for the tests. This would be an unfair advantage over those who had made no special preparation but only the general preparation of the quarter's work. After the test, the papers must again be sealed

and mailed in to the editor's office where all are graded. The Sunday school superintendent or teacher signs the following certificate:

Certificate of Examiner

I hereby certify that:

1. This test was not seen either by teacher or pupils until it was actually given in the class session.

2. The time limit given pupils was exactly ten minutes.

3. The tests were then collected and all are mailed in exactly as they were when collected.

4. No help was given any pupil whose paper is enclosed.

Teacher or superintendent sign here _____

Address _____

Name of Sunday School_____

Only tests accompanied by such certificate are accepted and graded.

In order that the opinions of the person grading the test be eliminated as a factor the tests must be objective. That is, the answer must be simple and clear, and such that any variation from it is complete failure. The pupil either makes the right answer or he misses it entirely.

Such tests may be graded from a pattern or key sheet as a mere clerical process.

To secure objectivity four kinds of tests are used, similar to those which have recently come into use in general education. The "true-false" tests consist of a long series of brief statements, a part of which are true and a part false. The student indicates which, in his judgment are true and which false.

The "multiple choice" test is one in which a statement is completed or a question answered by several clauses or statements, only one or two of which are correct. The student chooses those which are correct. The "split-sentence" consists of several compound sentences with the second clauses jumbled. The student must indicate which pairs of clauses make correct statements. The "completion" test consists of statements from which essential words and clauses are omitted which the student must fill in.

In religious education not only knowledge or information must be tested, but moral judgments, ideals, and attitudes as well. All these elements are brought into Graded Lesson Tests. They provide material for some interesting revelations as to the contents of the minds of students after having "gone through" or "gone over" a quarter's work.

Are these tests too difficult?—

When these tests are widely used over a period of time, we will know much more than we do now about the actual teaching efficiency of Sunday schools generally. The desirable degree of difficulty of the tests is, therefore, at present not easy to determine. The first tests were tempered to such a degree of difficulty that the author hoped to have a median score of about 80 out of a possible hundred. Two of the tests proved just about right. All the others were a little too difficult to place either the median or the average this high.

In fairness to all participants, therefore, the "distribution curve" or a comparison of each grade with all the others made in that test, was used in giving the rating. It was arbitrarily decided that the best fifteen per cent should be graded *A*, with 100 reserved for those of this number who made perfect scores. *B* means above the average but not in the upper fifteen per cent. *C* means below the average but not in the lowest fifteen per cent. *F* means in the lowest fifteen per cent. Plus after the letter means that the grade is almost in the next higher ranking. Minus means that it almost falls into a lower ranking. This gives a total of eleven different rankings—100, A-plus, A, A-minus, B-plus, B, B-minus, C-plus, C, C-minus, and F. Plus and

minus are not used for those who fall in the *F* rank.

Therefore, no one can say these tests are too difficult. One is not graded on what the author of the tests thinks he ought to know or do but rather on how his performance compares with that of all the others who take the test. If some of the tests were made much easier, there would be so many perfect scores as to invalidate the distinction of being perfect. However it is the aim to temper the tests so that at least the best 85 per cent will be able to reach 70 per cent or more, of perfect performance. The tests will inevitably increase in difficulty as they stimulate better and better work. Already the classes which have won the highest grades quarter after quarter are developing a religious educational aristocracy into which it will be difficult to climb.

Values of Graded Lesson Tests—

The most obvious value of using such standardized tests is, of course, the stimulus to better, more serious work on the part of both pupils and teachers. They are as interesting as a game, have all the competitive value of a contest (since the distribution curve is used in grading), have only good after effects, and place emphasis on quality of work where it belongs. The fact that these tests open the way for standardized credit which

will have real educational value is, of course, their greatest significance.

The Superintendent or Director of Religious Education finds them of great value in revealing the strong and weak units in his staff. This comparison is quite free from any local embarrassment since each teacher is compared as to educational output, not with other teachers in the same school but with all teachers elsewhere in the same grade.

Amazing irregularities are revealed in local Sunday schools as to the grading of pupils and the use of certain courses in grades for which they were not intended and are ill adapted. When the grades are reported back to such schools, suggestions are made to enable local leaders to overcome these needless handicaps to efficient teaching.

Cheating or "cribbing" in examinations is prevalent to an alarming degree in American high schools and colleges. Certainly if religion is worth anything in young life, it ought to help bring this condition under control. "Honor systems" have broken down and been discarded in many cases because there is insufficient honor on the part of student bodies at large to make such a system operative. This is an ominous warning as to the safety of democratic institutions under the leadership of a generation now being trained

for that very purpose. The only hope lies in the ideals and habits being developed among Christian young people. Religion alone furnishes the "drive" needed for ethical and honorable conduct.

How can the Sunday school best attack this difficult problem? Lessons, lectures, and sermons may serve to advertise the trouble but will give little practice in its solution. Graded Lesson Tests offer to students of junior and senior high school age a practical life situation every quarter, involving all the elements of a school examination under thoroughly Christian surroundings and influences. If these tests can be administered honorably, they will supply continual actual practice in the application of Christian ideals to this student situation. Thus they place in the hands of the teacher of religion an ideal instrument for accomplishing what may well be one of the main objectives of religious teaching. The possibility of actual practice in honesty held out by the Graded Lesson Tests is of no small value.

Graded Lesson Tests reveal not only points of weakness and strength in the work of the local church, but also in the courses of study for which they are prepared. A tabulation of the results of these tests on a certain course over a period of time will supply the most valuable basis obtainable for revision and improvement of such a

course. Since these tests measure not only the mastery of biblical and doctrinal facts and knowledge, but ethical judgments and choices as well, they will doubtless reveal the need of radical changes in emphasis and probably of entirely new courses. On the whole, it is probably not too much to say that the introduction of such standardized tests into the regular work of the Sunday school marks an epochal step in the progress of religious education.

CHAPTER 5

What Graded Lesson Tests Reveal

What actually happens—

CHANGE is both the goal and the method of education—change in the knowledge, the thought processes, the judgments, and the choices of the students. In religious education this change actually constitutes the development of Christian personality and moral character. It is the function of the school, by means of a course of study and learning situations, to produce change in its students in the desired direction. Some courses will enrich and correct the student's knowledge, which in turn will help him to choose and act more intelligently. Other courses will set up definite ideals of conduct and challenge his acceptance of and loyalty to them. Still other courses will provide actual practice in meeting life situations and solving problems of conduct and relationship. The most important concern of the teacher is to be sure that such change is actually under way. It is of prime importance, therefore, to check up at the close of a quarter's work in order to discover what has actually happened in the life of the pupils. How has knowledge been enriched? How have ideals been mod-

ified and elevated? How has conduct been brought increasingly under the control of Christian ideals?

Every graded lesson course aims definitely at certain changes or results in the lives of the pupils. The Graded Lesson Tests seek to measure success in attaining these results. Since they deal definitely with the subject matter and the stated aim of each course, they reveal the effectiveness of the quarter's work. Of course, the general background of the student is likewise inevitably represented in these results, but care is exercised to keep them very definitely based upon actual lesson material or stated aims so as to test more specifically the direct influence of Sunday school teaching. These tests seek, therefore, to measure what actually happens as a result of the teaching work of the school and class over a given period of time.

Successful teaching—

When one finds, for instance, that of the eight perfect papers among all those for a given third year Senior test, four come from a single class of eight and the four others from that class are well above the average, he knows that something really is happening in that class. When this same class wins the highest average three quarters in succession one would like to grasp the hand of that teacher in congratulation! Such an unusual

record is due to a serious professional attitude on the part of the teacher. An evidence of that attitude is the fact that for some time before the regular Graded Lesson Tests were available, tests prepared locally were being used in some of the classes of this particular school. Teaching is never successful until it begins to watch for and seek to measure results. The attempt to measure results is almost certain to be accompanied by a higher type of work. For example, one superintendent writes in, "I proposed to my teachers that we order the tests and they said, 'Why we couldn't use them this quarter without planning for it. Our work hasn't been thorough enough. Next quarter we will get ready for them and be glad to use them.'" Here was the first stimulus toward a professional attitude.

The papers each quarter of the winning class in each grade would do credit to the corresponding grade in any high school. Here and there throughout the country genuine educational work is being done in Sunday schools. Those who say that the Sunday school is a failure and must be replaced by other agencies such as week-day religious education, are leaving out of account the demonstrated educational fitness of many Sunday schools. Some Sunday schools are failing and are perhaps not worth even the small effort invested to keep them going. Their failure is due

usually not to any essential defect in the Sunday school as such, but to an entirely mistaken emphasis in Sunday school work. When Sunday schools begin to look for and to measure real spiritual results instead of mere numbers, their achievements will be spiritual as well as merely statistical.

Graded Lesson Tests have proven that genuinely educational work can be done in the Sunday school. What is being done here and there can be done in many other places. If it *can* be done, it *ought* to be done that the church fail not in her high responsibility to youth. To say that a thing which ought to be done cannot be done in your particular case is an indirect but complete confession of atheism.

The essential factor in success—

One of the most frequent excuses for poor work in the Sunday school is this, "These expert plans for better work are all made for the big, fully organized school. Our school is small. We can't expect to do much." Which means that the number mania has possession of the mind of these workers. In general the Graded Lesson Tests have discredited the very large school. They have been used by few very small schools, since few such schools yet have introduced graded lessons into the Young People's Division. The medium sized to small school seems, so far, to

rank highest in these tests. At least, mere size is no advantage provided a school is large enough to have its adolescents grouped for graded work. The schools usually played up in the statistical columns as the ten "Top Notchers" or ten largest schools in a certain communion have not been distinguished by many winning classes in the Graded Lesson Tests. On the other hand the winning classes have been almost entirely from schools which are never played up statistically. There are two reasons for this: the sensationally large school is doing little with the tests on the one hand, and the schools which are demonstrating a high quality of work by the tests are not interested in mere statistical publicity on the other. Therefore, the essential factor in success as revealed by the tests is not size or numbers.

Another excuse is, "We are not only small; we are poorly equipped." In a Kentucky city are several schools with excellent equipment. The winning class in the first test for second year Intermediates, however, was composed of a dozen girls in a small Sunday school of that city, using a remodeled residence as its equipment.

A few years ago a Sunday school worker proposed graded lessons to the teachers in a small village Sunday school in the south. No one was interested but the superintendent and his wife. They ordered and themselves paid for graded les-

sons for an Intermediate class which this good woman taught. That class won the highest average on the second quarter's test given second year Intermediates! Of course, enough numbers for efficient organization and enough equipment for tolerable teaching conditions are an important, but not the most essential factor in qualitative success.

On a given test the Senior Department of a certain western Sunday school averaged very high throughout. The entire Intermediate Department of the same school, however, fell quite below the average. Here size, equipment, general organization, social status of pupils and general supervision were identical. What one factor accounts for the difference? Obviously the immediate leadership. The Graded Lesson Tests show that the teaching staff is the essential factor in successful religious educational work.

What kind of a school is this?—

If you were grading tests and found that in a test in which ten errors were possible, every paper from a given class contained two and only two errors, and these the same two, what would you conclude? Or suppose, fifty errors were possible and every paper from a given class made the same twelve, some of which were quite ridiculous? Or suppose you found several pupils from a given class agreeing in a given incorrect an-

swer, and yet these were the only papers received which contained this particular error?

One conclusion is that the teacher in these cases has been "dead wrong" about certain facts and has succeeded in teaching these errors perfectly in spite of the fact that they are contrary to the Bible and quarterlies used. The other conclusion is that the pupils received help either from the teacher or each other, in spite of the fact that the teacher or superintendent signed and returned a certificate saying "No help was given any pupil whose paper is enclosed."

Fortunately, such cases as these are very exceptional. On these tests there is every evidence that "cribbing" is almost entirely eliminated. Certainly it is present much less than in the average high school and college. If Graded Lesson Tests can teach boys and girls honor and honesty in taking tests, they will be a great service. Any set of papers gives itself away if "cribbing" has been used. Such papers are eliminated from recognition in the tests. The Graded Lesson Test thus becomes an unequalled opportunity for the Sunday school teacher to develop a most effective lesson on honor and self-reliance once each quarter, as has already been noted.

What chance have these pupils?—

In a given school there are two mixed classes, one ranging in age from 14 to 28 and the other

from 15 to 28. Both are studying the course for older young people, "The Bible and Social Living," the first quarter's lessons of which are largely about the family and social problems connected with it. Why should not the younger members of each class be combined into a class which would study some course within range of their interests and needs, leaving the older students free to get really into the rich course on social Christianity? We hope the tests will help this school to a better grading.

In a number of other cases pupils are studying graded lessons written for those four or five years older. Some classes which are well graded, having a narrow age range, are using courses prepared for classes averaging one to three years older or younger. Teachers are laboring under a hopeless handicap where graded lessons are used in violation of the graded principle.

Revelations—

After having a lesson on Joshua, twenty per cent of the second year Intermediate pupils agreed that he was the successor of Moses but insisted also that he was one of the twelve apostles or disciples. Ten per cent insisted that Joshua was one of the twelve tribes. Others said he was one of the twelve wise men, prophets, "profits," or judges. The others agreed that it was as one of the twelve spies that he made a

good report. One pupil with striking originality selected Abraham as the successor of Moses and insisted that he was also one of the twelve apostles.

After a full geography lesson on the "Land of Hebrew History," pupils completed the following sentence with the words which follow, each word being used by from one to five pupils. "The land of Hebrew history lies chiefly in the continent of ————." Canaan, Palestine, Egypt, Europe, Arabi, Abrama, Abaker, Canon, Isaia, Africa, Jerusalem, Faith. The last one took no chances on it being on this earth at all!

Third year Intermediates were given a series of statements about half of which were true, and about half false, according to the course of study which they were pursuing. "Jesus feared death for he knew that if he died his followers would be scattered and his work would come to nothing." Twenty-five per cent marked this "True." "Jesus claimed that all authority had been given to him." After a lesson on the "Great Commission," think of 43 per cent marking this "False." "Peter was a carpenter by trade." After seven lessons on Peter, one of which was on "Peter the Fisherman," 33 per cent marked this "True." After a lesson on Jesus' forgiveness of Peter, 16 per cent marked the following "True." "Peter's denial was too great a sin to be fully forgiven by

Jesus.'' Thirty per cent denied that Peter preached the great sermon on the Day of Pentecost; 66 per cent agreed that study of the Old Testament is the best way to learn all about God and to know him fully. Yet this class belonged to that historic religious movement, the distinctive message of which has been the authority of the New Testament alone, and the elementary and inferior character of the revelation made in the Old Testament. The lesson on which this test statement was based had aimed to make clear the distinctive value and function of the New Testament in this respect.

On a similar test 50 per cent of the second year Seniors believed that ''Christianity requires that we deny ourselves of some good things''; 65 per cent denied that ''it takes a hero really to live the Christian life''; 30 per cent believed ''one can do as much good if he simply lives a Christian life without belonging to an organization or church''; 22 per cent thought ''the way in which one treats his mother is no indication of his attitude toward God''; 40 per cent denied that ''conscience may lead one astray''; 60 per cent thought that ''most wrongdoing is because of ignorance of what is right.'' (This test might be a proof that they are right.) Fourteen per cent said, ''Old Testament heroes had more religious privileges than we have today''; 33 per cent de-

nied that "excessive luxury is sinful"; 11 per cent denied that it is possible for an American Christian, even if his religion be genuine, to love a Chinaman, a Negro, or an Indian.

After a lesson devoted to showing that the great issues of history are determined and settled largely by great individual leaders, 36 per cent of the third year Seniors yet affirmed that they are settled by "forces over which man has no control." "The divine call to a given service or vocation consists largely of the ability to prepare effectively to meet some great human need," was the message of one lesson. Yet 36 per cent said that it consists of "some peculiar vision or similar experience by which God's will is miraculously made known." Jesus had been presented as in the New Testament, "A robust, athletic, vigorous man with remarkable endurance." Yet 26 per cent still thought of him from medieval pictures as "a sorrowful, gentle, and retiring person," while to 25 per cent more he was presented in the New Testament as "a person of medium stature with a beard and long hair, always dressed in a white robe."

Following are samples chosen from other tests. In the cases of the "True-False" statements the percentages are indicated. That is, the statement "Saul lost his chance through disobedience" was marked true by seventy-five per cent of the stu-

dents and false by twenty-five per cent of them. Again let it be remembered that every one of these test statements is based upon specific material in lessons of the quarter.

Second Year Intermediate

75% True 25% False—Saul lost his chance through disobedience.

48% True 52% False—David's courage was due to his skill with his slingshot.

92% True 8% False—David's trust in Jehovah made him strong and brave.

18% True 82% False—Success comes from power and wealth.

37% True 63% False—Jonah loved the people of Nineveh.

84% True 16% False—The story of Jonah is a great missionary lesson.

22% True 78% False—Jonah learned that God loved the Jews better than other races.

The test from which the above samples are taken is for thirteen-year-old pupils. To try out whether or not it would be too difficult it was submitted to an eleven-year-old girl who has had no Bible training except the Primary and first and second year Junior graded lessons. She marked the test in three minutes less than the time allowed and made a grade of 85. Yet the *median*

grade made on this test by Intermediates themselves was 69.

Third Year Intermediate

The following incomplete sentence was completed by writing in the names indicated:
_____ wrote the Book of Revelation to comfort persecuted Christians. 39% wrote "John," 12% "Paul," 3% "Matthew," 2% "Peter," 1% "Jesus," 1% "Stephen." "John, the Baptist," "James," "Ethiopian," "Barnabas," "Mark," and "Simon" were other guesses.

Fourteen per cent were able to fill in nine words omitted from the first two verses of the memory Scripture, but only 4 per cent could fill in two words omitted from the last verse. This shows that a start had been made on the memory work in only 14 per cent of the cases but it had been thoroughly completed by only 4 per cent.

First Year Senior

40% True 60% False—The most important work of Jesus was healing.

65% True 35% False—The greatest need of the church is for better trained leaders.

43% True 57% False—It is more important for a preacher to have a pleasing manner of preaching than strong personal influence.

11% True 89% False—Jesus chose the Twelve to protect him against his enemies.

22% True 78% False—Jesus taught that Christians must not try to be too happy.

67% True 33% False—Jesus cannot help some people because they will not trust him.

80% True 20% False—Good and evil can be tested better by deeds than by beliefs.

35% True 65% False—John the Baptist preached the Sermon on the Mount to his disciples.

89% True 11% False—The Christian can afford to give up everything else rather than his religion.

11% True 89% False—The frequent prayers of Jesus were a sign of his weakness.

9% True 91% False—Wealth and power are the only basis of true success.

44% True 56% False—It was Peter who made the good confession at Caesarea-Philippi. (Think of this, among the Disciples for whom Peter's Confession is their only creed.)

44% True 56% False—The Transfiguration was a dream of Peter's.

Second Year Senior

The first 212 tests returned were tabulated and it is likely the others followed in about the same proportion. The number after each phrase indicates the number of students who underlined it

as the *very best one* of the four to complete the sentence. Remember, that in all these tests the lessons had dealt with the specific matters involved in the tests.

We should limit our friendships to those
of our own race. 13.
of our own religious belief. 13.
who love us. 15.
whom we can befriend. 171.

The meaning of the cross in Christianity is
the failure of Jesus. 1.
the sacrificial spirit. 168.
the victory of the enemies of Jesus. 10.
salvation is free. 33.

Our religion should act in our lives as a means of
social advancement. 25.
keeping us satisfied. 39.
winning success in business. 12.
controlling our conduct. 136.

Sin is always
attractive to us. 25.
punished in this life. 45.
the choice of the lesser good. 96.
just what we consider wrong. 46.

The choice of one's occupation if he is a Christian is
a test of loyalty to ideals. 174.

to enter the ministry. 19.
no one's business but his own. 12.
not a religious matter. 7.

Modern knowledge enables us to
outgrow religious belief. 8.
depend more on God. 107.
hold to our Christian convictions. 94.
give up hope of future life. 3.

Our chief use of prayer should be to
get what we want. 0.
let God know our needs. 72.
guide us in our desires. 109.
change God's attitude toward us. 25.

It is a correct use of prayer to pray for
victory in football. 12.
a better house. 34.
rain. 88.
help during examinations. 78.

The best description of the relation of a Christian to Christ is
a servant of Christ. 69.
a soldier of Christ. 36.
a friend of Christ. 88.
a subject of Christ. 19.

Third Year Senior

10% True 90% False—Jesus is not concerned with business matters.

70% True 30% False—He profits most who serves best.

80% True 20% False—Women can have a great influence in Christianizing business.

75% True 25% False—The teachings of Jesus were meant to apply to modern industry.

7% True 93% False—The Golden Rule in industry results in financial failure.

16% True 84% False—A Christian cannot afford to risk his religion by becoming a lawyer or politician.

30% True 70% False—Rotten politics make Christian statesmanship impossible.

21% True 79% False—The "spoils system" should be developed and extended.

19% True 81% False—Doctors who prevent spread of disease foolishly limit their own practice.

16% True 84% False—It is foolish for girls who do not work to study vocations.

44% True 56% False—There is no use in studying about a vocation one does not expect to enter.

4% True 96% False—Christians should have nothing to do with amusements.

These samples indicate what the tests are like, about how difficult they are, and how disappointing some of the returns are. In many classes little is really happening in the direction of en-

riched religious knowledge, or commitment to clearly Christian ideals.

These tests reveal an alarming degree of failure in Sunday school work even among the better type of schools which are using graded lessons and care enough about results to use tests. Certainly failure is much less among these selected schools than among schools in general. It is apparent that all is not well generally in the field of religious education. What is most needed by the Sunday school, however, is not negative criticism, but constructive diagnosis which will discover and prescribe a remedy for the weakest factors in its program.

CHAPTER 6

The Trouble Finder

Why we need him—

OH, yes, we Sunday school workers all have our "fault finders." I am quite sure we do not need them any more than we need gadflies. But the "trouble finder"; ah, that's different. Things are never right for the fault finder and probably he finds the most fault with the things that are most nearly faultless. But the trouble finder has a very different motive. He does not purpose to find fault but rather to correct difficulties which are already recognized but the causes of which remain obscure.

In previous chapters we have suggested the objective of religious education and some simple questions by which the leader can test out whether he is really "putting it over" in educational output. The Graded Lesson Tests reveal an alarming degree of failure in qualitative results. It is important that we know not only *when* we are failing, or *that* we are failing, but *why* we are failing. This requires not merely that we put greater pressure on some phases of our work such as attendance, or bringing Bibles, or punctuality. It requires a careful analysis of

our whole procedure to learn just where the cause of the trouble is. Either we need to call in a professional "trouble finder" to check over our work and advise a remedy or we need ourselves to assume a critical testing attitude toward every phase of our work and seek to locate the reason for underproduction of real results. Without such a careful and critical attitude we might do exactly the opposite thing to that needed. To boost an attendance campaign when the present teaching staff is inadequate or untrained is like giving an already "flooded" motor more gas when it refuses to start. In fact, perhaps the automobile can teach us a lesson. Many think its advent has ruined the church. Perhaps, however, it has supplied many of us with a set of experiences which have value when brought into the Sunday school situation.

The "bucking" motor—

The "bucking" bronco is proverbial as a tester of patience as well as of physical endurance. But cold weather brings to many an automobile driver a test almost equally severe. Just between ourselves, I've seen the time when I would gladly have traded a "bucking" automobile for the worst bronco ever mounted. At least one could express his exasperation upon the bronco with a little more satisfaction than upon a cold and senseless motor.

However, there is one essential difference in favor of the gas engine. Its failure to respond is not due just to "general cussedness" nor to a stubborn and undisciplined will, but to the absence of some essential factor or condition necessary to correct operation. There must be a steady gas supply minutely regulated. This must be mixed with just the right amount of air. A certain temperature is necessary for good results. (Hence the trouble on cold mornings.) There must be a good strong spark to ignite the gas, and this must be timed at just the right point to make the explosion effective. The starter or crank must give a sufficiently vigorous impetus to bring about conditions for the initial explosion. Once the motor is going, "idling," the gears must be in good order so that the power may be converted into propulsion of the car. When one realizes the many factors involved, failure of any one of which will mean failure of the whole really to deliver the desired result, one wonders that the car "bucks" as seldom as it does. In dealing with the "bucking" car the best method is not continually to prod along those factors which are already doing well, but rather to locate the one which is causing the difficulty and remedy it.

Obviously one might press the analogy between the automobile and the class or Sunday

school to the point of the ridiculous. That will be left to the reader's nimble imagination. He would be dull indeed who could not find in the Sunday school the spiritual (?) counterpart for gas, too much of which is as bad as too little; air, which if cold is fatal and even if hot may be overdone; the timer which is always getting out of order; the spark which vitalizes the whole into power; and the transmission by which the power generated is actually geared into pulling the loads of life; not to mention the crank or self-starter as the case may be; and the lubrication and cooling systems.

The engineer, if he be a real "trouble finder," knows all the factors involved and explores them one by one to locate the seat of the trouble when the car "bucks." The novice may know only two or three of the factors and all the remedies he can try are restricted to those. The first trouble I ever had with a car was remedied by the crank method. The car refused to respond to the starter. "Battery too weak," said the expert advisor. "Give her a whirl with the crank." Off she started! For some time all my troubles were solved by a "whirl with the crank." Then came a time when this failed. "Dirty spark-plugs," said the expert trouble finder and I cleaned them. Cleaning spark-plugs became my stock remedy. Then came a time

when this failed. "Timer dirty and timer spring broken," said the trouble finder and I was started on the timer phase of my engineering career. Next came carburetor adjustment and cleaning. Then cold weather brought expert advice, "Pour hot water on the manifold." One by one I mastered the commonest causes of motor trouble and myself became something of an amateur trouble finder. Now when a car stalls I do not try one or two time-worn remedies to the point of exhaustion, and then stand by helpless and dejected, but I go industriously through a long series of investigations, locating the trouble before blindly trying to apply a stock remedy.

"Spiritual engineers"—

Some teachers and superintendents rise to the level of efficiency implied by this title. Many remain novices. I have visited Sunday schools in which the leaders were specializing on particular types of tinkering like those of my novice motoring days. A number of vigorous whirls at the crank! Then some more cranking! And between exhausting spells of cranking, standing dejectedly panting, wondering why the old standby method is not putting it over. Many are the timer tinkers! "If we should just start on time everything would be all right." Others always "give her a little more gas," when perhaps she's already "flooded." So it goes. No

careful and intelligent diagnosis of the situation with attention to all the factors involved. As a matter of fact most of the attention is being given to those factors which are already functioning best. Continuous attention to minor defects and an annual general check over or survey are as necessary to successful Sunday school work as to safe and dependable motoring.

But, alas, many a Sunday school worker falls below the greenest motorist when it comes to measuring the success of his work. Even a fool knows a running engine from a still one and one which is pulling from one which is merely "idling." And a six-year-old can read the speedometer.

No motorist would be fool enough to go through all the motions of starting his car and then be indifferent as to whether it actually started or did not. His objective is so concrete and evident that he will never confuse failure and success. But many a Sunday school worker goes through many of the motions of successful operation and then if he be genuinely honest, is forced to confess: "I wonder if I am really putting it over? Am I succeeding or not?" It is as important that the spiritual engineer be able to recognize and measure results as that the motorist be able to. The question, "What is the difference between success and failure?" can

only be answered by first answering another question, "What am I actually trying to do?" "What, for me, will be a 'dead' motor, a mere 'idling' motor, or one which is geared into actual tasks of Christian living and service?" So important is this that we reiterate here the method by which the teacher of Christianity must work.

"Practice makes perfect"—

Obviously the Sunday school is concerned with actual Christian living, not merely with memory work, drill, and lessons. True, these may be essential factors but the actual output of the religious educational process lies beyond these. They may be needed to "make the motor go," but they are not the actual pulling power of Christian conduct and personality.

Learning to live the Christian life is no different from learning any other art which requires skill and appreciation. It is largely a matter of practice. Penmanship, piano playing, foreign languages, tennis, and public speaking are mastered in the main not by accumulating bodies of the statements of experts in these various fields, but rather by actually practicing them. The more frequently one is immersed in a situation demanding action in the direction of mastering the art, the more rapid is the progress. It is not surprising that the optimistic youth who learned to swim by a correspondence course which was

pure theory and ever so expert, actually drowned at his first attempt to practice his newly acquired art.

Skill in the fine art of Christian living is no more to be acquired in a question-and-answer or lecture-class performance than swimming is by correspondence. The supreme function of the Christian teacher is to lead his pupils unto situations in which actual Christian decisions will be made by them and in which principles of Christian action will be wrought out in the crucible of real life experience. Public education may worry along for a generation longer with a traditional method. It is increasingly evident that only this "project" approach is adequate in religious education. As evidence that a motor is operating successfully you listen to its "hum," but you also throw it into gear, watch its "pick-up," note the speed it can develop, how well it runs slowly, and how it pulls on a hill. As evidence that a Sunday school or class is "delivering the goods" you not only listen to the quiet regular "hum" of its industry, but you wish to see its members meeting the tests of life under all sorts of conditions, and to see if their religion is actually the power which is pulling the load for them.

The essential factor—

If it isn't pulling just right as a result of your teaching or leadership then it's time to start

"trouble finding." A motor which runs only when "idling" is worthless. An "idling" motor, if the gears are a little loose, makes more noise than one which is actually pulling. Don't depend too much on the noise some classes or schools make. "Stepping on the gas" often merely races the motor; lots of "warming up" but no pulling. In the next chapter let us "check over" one by one the factors essential to a worthy output and discover just what is lacking in our particular case.

CHAPTER 7

The Fundamental Factor

The factors involved—

THE educational output of a Church school is conditioned by these three basic factors: *teaching efficiency, the duration and frequency of teaching periods,* and *the number of pupils involved.* The vast majority of Sunday schools actually place the greatest emphasis on the last, the next greater emphasis on the second, and least emphasis on the first. In this distribution of emphasis they are totally mistaken.

Quantitative factors—

The duration and frequency of teaching periods (the time element), and the number of pupils involved (the mass or numerical element) are both quantitative measures. There are limits of efficiency as to a minimum and also as to a maximum for both these elements. That is, a class must not be so small that the educational process cannot be socialized. But neither must it be so large that the individual is lost in the mass. The teaching period must not be so short that mental processes will be unable to become well organized and gather momentum through interest, or that activities cannot be carried forward suffi-

ciently to keep interest alive through achievement. A "class" of two or three or a period of less than thirty minutes of actual teaching is certainly below the minimum for educational efficiency. A class of more than twenty-five is above the maximum for efficiency for any but the lecture method, which is probably the least effective educationally of all methods. The teaching period may be extended to several hours, provided only that the activities are sufficiently diversified to maintain interest and freshness of attention. Obviously, any of these quantitative limits are determined by the age group involved and the educational method used. The important thing is that in seeking to understand and control the factors determining educational output these two quantitative measures be recognized as of equal importance, and that the limits within which each factor may operate with educational efficiency likewise be recognized and defined.

Qualitative factors—

Teaching efficiency, or the *qualitative* measure of the educational process is the fundamental factor in output. Graded Lesson Tests and general observation reveal an astonishing difference between the educational output of some schools and that of others. There is some variation in the size of classes, yet this seemed to have little bear-

ing on the results except in the cases of extremely small or extremely large classes. There is probably little variation in the duration and frequency of teaching periods. The only factor which can account adequately for the varied results is that of teaching efficiency. This, therefore, is the factor most available for improvement. Probably we shall find ultimately that the quantitative factors can be strengthened indirectly through the qualitative factors better than by working upon them directly.

In the mechanical realm it is impossible to develop 100 per cent efficiency. Friction can never be entirely eliminated, nor can every unit of energy be transmitted without some escape or dissipation. Some steam engines run on efficiency as low as 10 to 25 per cent.

Neither can 100 per cent teaching efficiency be developed. In the next chapter we shall analyze the teaching efficiency of Jesus and see that even he did not develop nearly 100 per cent efficiency because of conditions which he could not control as a teacher.

A formula—

Teaching efficiency × number of pupils × teaching time = educational output. As teaching efficiency approaches zero, educational output falls accordingly. Therefore, a school of 300 average attendance, with a 30 minute teaching period, if

it had a teaching efficiency of 10 per cent would have an educational output of 10% × 300 × ½ hour = 15 units (of religious life or spiritual value) per week.

If the teaching efficiency were doubled, the other factors remaining unchanged, the educational output would be doubled or 20% × 300 × ½ hour = 30 units. If the teaching efficiency of 10 per cent were reduced by half, the output would be 5% × 300 × ½ hour = 7.5 units. These would be the results provided changing the teaching efficiency had no influence upon the quantitative measures.

It is even possible that teaching efficiency, so far as religious objectives are concerned, may fall below zero as in the case when, as a child, I once attended a Sunday school class entirely devoted to "Jack the Giant Killer" stories. The actual output in spiritual units of such a class might be computed as follows: number of pupils, 20; duration ½ hour; teaching efficiency (due to negative religious results) −10 per cent. −10% × ½ × 20 = −1 or one unit of negative religious influence or spiritual life. When the discipline, slovenly attendance habits, irreverence, and doubtful teaching quality of some Sunday schools are actually computed, it might be found they are doing more harm than good and ought to be closed for

the protection of youth and the welfare of the community!

Analyzing teaching efficiency—

This factor is so fundamental that we must further analyze it into its constituent elements or factors. Only so can we locate the factors which are under our control and so subject to our efforts at improvement.

There are three elements or factors also in teaching efficiency, the first of which is fundamental: *the natural ability and the preparation of the teacher, the teaching conditions,* and *the teachableness of the pupils.*

The ability and preparation of the teacher depend upon such factors as personal religious life and experience, a pleasing and winsome personality, love for the work, love of the pupils, physical fitness, mental acumen, general educational preparation, general experience, special religious educational preparation, teaching experience, and immediate preparation of lessons. It is easy to see which of these are under one's control and so subject to improvement at will.

Teaching conditions consist of such factors as a separate room, attractive and favorable decorations, comfortable furniture, light, heat, ventilation, grading or age range of class, adequate and attractive teaching materials with subject matter well chosen and well prepared, size of class, and

freedom from disturbances. These are all subject to control and may be improved.

The teachableness of the pupils is conditioned by age, native intelligence, social and mental background, prejudice or openmindedness, general educational background, special or immediate preparation, physical condition, regularity of attendance, and social attitude. It is the object of education to control most of these factors and to register actual religious educational output in the changes wrought in them. Future output is largely conditioned by that of the past because teachableness itself is one of the most valuable elements in educational output. The product of a school or class which makes for further teachableness is cumulative and multiplies rapidly, while any output which makes for the closed mind or the self-satisfied life is abortive and has a retroactive effect on teaching efficiency, pulling it rapidly down to the negative side of zero. This is why the religious educational output of some well-meaning Sunday schools, Bible colleges, and Bible teachers is negative in its total religious value.

The first of these three elements resides in the teacher and improvement here is fundamental to that in the others. The second resides in the institution, which exists solely for the sake of bringing pupils and teacher together to form

the educational group under favorable conditions. The third resides in the pupil as, at the same time, the means and the end in the educational process. Next let us analyze the teaching efficiency of Jesus into these various factors. Why was not Jesus 100 per cent efficient in educational output?

CHAPTER 8

Was the Teaching of Jesus One Hundred Per Cent Efficient?

It was not—

JESUS is the world's greatest teacher. The problems and difficulties faced by all teachers become evident when we see how far short of 100 per cent efficiency the teaching of even Jesus fell. What do we mean by efficiency? In a steam engine, it is the ratio which the actual working power or "output" bears to the total amount of energy or "effort" invested. The engine converts heat units into power units in such form and amount that they can be harnessed to useful tasks. But only a small proportion of the heat units actually invested (or of the "effort" put forth), are so converted, since much heat is lost or wasted by not being applied at just the right point, and there is always friction to be overcome. An efficient engine, therefore, will deliver energy in the form desired by the engineer and in an amount fairly proportionate to the required investment of fuel.

An efficient teacher of the Christian religion will deliver, through the life of his pupils, spiritual energy expressing itself in transformed char-

acter, controlled conduct, and enriched experience. This output will be in accordance with the ideals and aims set by the Master Teacher and in amount fairly proportionate to the total investments made of time, equipment, and effort.

The major teaching efforts of Jesus were invested in the Twelve. One of these was a total failure in spite of all Jesus could do. Failure was also partial with all the others. Jesus was continually being disappointed by the results of his efforts. "Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip?" "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," imply his disappointment. The contention over places of honor in the Kingdom, the denial of Peter, the despair of the disciples at his crucifixion, in spite of Jesus' assurances to them of his coming resurrection, their fear and doubt at his return: all these were evidences, at the conclusion of his personal teaching program, of his partial failure to realize his aim. Failure was still more pronounced in the case of the Pharisees, his old neighbors at Nazareth, and the multitude generally.

It is a question whether Jesus would have considered his own teaching efficiency as higher than 60 to 70 per cent, if as high. Of course, any estimate which we place upon his efficiency must be largely an arbitrary figure for purposes of com-

parison. We can never estimate the unstinted love, devotion, and effort which he poured forth as they were drawn from and backed by the limitless resources of divine energy and love. Nor can we measure the ultimate output, for the end is not yet. We can only estimate by the cases of failure or wasted effort which we observe that the total output is considerably below the investment, and certainly fell short of the aim. As a rough and arbitrary mark, merely for the sake of comparison, suppose we rate the total teaching efficiency of Jesus as 75 per cent.

Why was it not higher?—

Recalling the factors involved, we see that this partial success is no reflection upon either the character or the teaching ability of Jesus. Factors beyond his control impaired what would have been a perfect result. The *ability and preparation of the teacher* are fundamental factors in teaching efficiency. In these respects Jesus may well be rated at 100 per cent. Certainly no other teacher has ever even approached his excellence here.

But teaching efficiency is also affected by *teaching conditions.* Jesus made the best of a generally unfavorable situation. He chose a small group carefully selected from a much larger number. Frequently when handicapped by the crowd he used symbolic terms which concealed the real

point from the crowd while revealing it to the small group. He had the group separate as much as possible. Although the world's choicest epigrams fell from his lips, he placed little dependence on mere talk. *He shared the life and experience of his students in the hope that he might thus get them to share his.* This was made possible only by working with a small group and at the cost of much time. The teaching was not organized around "courses of study" or bodies of knowledge, but around life problems and real experiences. The mighty project of the "Kingdom" or the government of God, a social order under the full control of God's will, was the core of his teaching enterprise. The activities in which he led and upon which he dispatched his disciples were all phases of this gigantic project.

But the crowd was always interfering. Suspicious Pharisees heckled him. His reputation and rôle as a healer took much time and energy. It threatened to subordinate his major work of teaching by its more spectacular results. The body of religious traditions and customs which were widely accepted as the essential content of any course of study in religious education worked against the success of Jesus. He was compelled specifically to renounce this generally accepted curriculum: "Ye have heard it said . . . but I say unto you . . ."

The very vigor and effectiveness of his teaching program shortened the time available since it called down upon him the enmity and destructive plots of jealous heresy hunters who, with tragic cruelty, cut short his teaching career. By dulling the edge of his message with a concession here and there Jesus might have extended the time. But he preferred intensive quality at the cost of time rather than to gain time through adulterating his message and purpose.

The third factor in teaching efficiency is the *teachableness of the pupils* due to youth, open-mindedness, and general intellectual and educational background. The group which Jesus chose was made up of young men, but they were beyond the age of greatest teachableness. Why did not Jesus depend upon work with children? The age in which Jesus lived was adult-centered, not youth-centered like our own. "Let no man despise thy youth" was as natural a warning to a young preacher than as "Let no man despise thy gray hairs" would be to a veteran of the ministry today. While Jesus was "youth-centered" in his own thinking, a mere "youth movement" would have been crushed by the weight of presupposition against it.

Then Jesus realized how limited his time was. While thoroughness of educational results demands youth, quickness of results demands some

maturity. That his eternal message might become embodied in a definite movement Jesus counted upon men, young men, as the surest stewards of his spirit and purpose.

Yet they were adults with prejudices, fixed thought patterns, well set habits, and wilful ambitions. They thought they already knew what "the Kingdom of God" meant. "Old wine skins" were continually brought forward to contain the "new wine." Baffled and dismayed by their wooden headed perversity Jesus finally called a child and, setting him in their midst, said, "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Jesus met his most serious obstacle in this lack of teachableness on the part of his disciples. If he could not depend upon children alone to carry out his purposes, at least he depended only upon the childlike.

What is your efficiency?—

In a sense every Christian is a teacher. His self-commitment to Christ and his Kingdom has brought to him certain rich and fruitful experience. To be maintained or even retained, this experience must be shared. But the sharing of experience was the chief method of the Great Teacher. The Good Confession calls each of us to this sharing, teaching ministry. If the teaching efficiency of Jesus was 75 per cent, what is

yours? Ten per cent, or five, or perhaps not much above zero? Do not hesitate thus to compare your teaching with his. You have entered into a great teaching fellowship of which he is the founder and the pattern. Only by comparison can improvement be won. You are duty bound to compare your efficiency with his.

In so far as we work with children we have an advantage as to the factor of teachableness. Christian ideals have sufficiently permeated the general social environment as to render our task easier also. We do not necessarily suffer from bitter enmity, from heckling, from the curious crowds and from gross misunderstanding as much as Jesus did. We have a legal, social, and institutional standing in the community which greatly improves our teaching conditions.

But when it comes to that fundamental factor of natural ability and preparation we cringe at the comparison. We are willing to grant that if his efficiency be rated at 75 per cent, ours must be as low as 10 per cent or 5 per cent or 2 per cent. And this in spite of our advantage over him in the matter of teaching conditions and the teachableness of our pupils!

How then shall we increase our educational output and strive to reach a more worthy comparison with the teaching efficiency of Jesus? Not by stressing numbers, since Jesus was handi-

capped by crowds and sought to escape them. Not by an adult-centered program, since Jesus found his most serious obstacle in their lack of childlike teachableness. Not by dulling the edge of our message or adulterating our clear visioned purpose, for Jesus sacrificed years of his life for the sake of an uncompromising testimony to his unique experience of God and his revolutionary vision of God's Kingdom. Not simply by multiplying "courses" and delivering lectures, for Jesus depended upon the sharing of experience as his fundamental method.

After all there is only one basic need, the need for a better qualified, more adequately trained leadership for the educational task of His disciples.

CHAPTER 9

How to Fool Yourself

Let's double our school!—

"OUR Sunday school is doing well in every way but in attendance. Can you suggest some plan by which we may double our attendance within the next few months?" "Please tell us about your latest attendance scheme." "Have you some new plan by which we can build up our attendance?" These are typical of the most characteristic requests which come to some leaders and field workers in religious education. They are typical of the only emphasis given in a great many Sunday schools. That this is a mistaken emphasis is no reflection upon these ambitious leaders. They may have been taught little else. Certain Sunday school periodicals place the main emphasis here, printing volumes of attendance statistics, playing up the *big* schools and *big* classes as though mere bigness were the chief objective in Sunday school work. Fortunately, it is not a legitimate objective at all. Many of the little schools of about a hundred in which the vast majority of Sunday school work is being done are more worthy of praise than mob-minded assemblies who spend much of their time counting noses and making reports.

Of course, a big school may be a good school and many have become big by first being good. But a small school may also be a good school. Whether large or small the school whose attendance is growing very rapidly is facing a far more serious problem of maintaining its proper educational output than either the large school or the small school which is fairly stable in size.

The real objective—

All will admit on serious thought that the real objective is not size but educational output. For mere size a circus, a prize fight, or a big league game has it all over a Sunday school. We really want Christian ideals and motives to be spreading and becoming more vigorous so that the Sunday school is actually causing a rising tide of spiritual life and ethical conduct in the community. That is why we want numbers. Other things being equal the more people we reach, the greater will be our educational output.

But numbers or the numerical factor is not the only one involved. There is the time element, the duration and frequency of the teaching periods. Fundamental to these quantitative measures is that of the *quality* of work actually being done. This qualitative measure is known as teaching efficiency. As we have previously seen, it is due to the native ability and the preparation of the

teacher, teaching conditions, and the teachableness of the pupils.

The formula, *Number of pupils* × *duration of teaching period* × *number of periods* × *teaching efficiency* = *educational output,* takes account of all factors involved. To double any of these factors, other things being equal, will double the educational output. It is with the hope of actually doubling the output of spiritual influence that any superintendent enters an attendance campaign to double the attendance;—that is if he has any clear notion at all as to why he is doing it. He is not merely interested in getting a crowd together. He is not simply drumming up a mob. If this is all he is doing he is foolish to call it a Sunday school since there are other names which would have more drawing power. No, these leaders who want to "double the school" are thinking usually of the good the school is doing and they think to double the school will double the output.

On with the campaign!—

Let us analyze what actually takes place in a campaign which stresses only numbers, say a "red and blue" contest or a "trip to Jerusalem" contest or an "aeroplane flight to the moon" contest or a contest with another school or town. Suppose our present average attendance is 300, and our present teaching period is one-half hour

weekly. Suppose our present teaching efficiency is about 10 per cent. (Remember, in the last chapter we rated that of Jesus at 75 per cent. Probably 10 per cent is high for us on that basis. Also we noted in Chapter 2 that results as to knowledge and active church membership indicate an average efficiency of 10 per cent or less.) Our present weekly educational output is: 10% × ½ hour × 300 pupils = 15 units (of spiritual influence or religious life expressed in our constituency).

We enter a campaign to increase the attendance to 600 so that our formula will be at the climax: 10% × ½ hour × 600 = 30 units of output. Presto! We have doubled our output. What a great school we have! Broadcast the report and make the "ten top-notchers" tremble for their place in the sun!

A campaign takes time—

We have done this in a comparatively short time. Such a campaign "wears out" and fails if it is too long drawn out. A few weeks or months is as long as interest can be maintained at a continually increasing pitch. Such a contest or campaign has taken whirlwind promotion. Every class and department has been organized up to the highest efficiency for getting attendance. This has been of supreme interest. It had right of way. Campaign managers and captains

have been prominent. Elaborate reports have been eagerly scrutinized. Speeches and reports on attendance have taken time in the assembly and it has encroached on class time. But class interest and activity also have been organized around getting more attendance rather than around getting educational interest. Class time is consumed also in the campaign. Instead of the teacher having full thirty minutes free from outside interests and digressions to devote to the teaching work, the actual teaching time is reduced to twenty minutes. No campaign vigorous enough to double attendance can run on less than ten minutes a week. This ten minutes is, of course, borrowed from the teaching time. So our formula at the climax is:

$10\% \times \frac{1}{3}$ (instead of $\frac{1}{2}$) $\times 600 = 20$ a gain of only $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent in output, though attendance doubled.

Teaching conditions suffer—

Few Sunday school buildings in use at present can take care of double the present attendance and provide equally good teaching conditions. Our 300 pupils may have been well cared for with separate classrooms, plenty of comfortable chairs, and desks or tables, adequate floor space, ventilation, and air space to make for good teaching conditions. Few of the classes were likely too small for good work. But now dump 300 more pupils

into this situation and what teaching conditions have we? Every class has doubled, but no provision was made for additional equipment. Some rooms are bound to be crowded. Classes will have to be shifted around from pillar to post. The whole situation is congested and stifling to good teaching. Teaching efficiency falls rapidly.

Several of the classes are now far too large for one teacher, but no provision has been made for additional teachers, classes, and rooms as our interest has been solely in attendance. Big classes tax teaching efficiency still further.

The shortened period has also affected teaching efficiency since with all, except small children, at least thirty minutes is needed to develop a good teaching situation and make any worth-while change in the pupils. In fact, the regular teaching course is dangerously near being a side issue.

Teachableness reduced—

Remember, on the average, every class has doubled. This means that one-half of the pupils have recently entered the class. These do not have the background of the earlier lessons and courses. To meet their needs, the teaching has to be so altered as to sacrifice the welfare of the original pupils. Probably some have been won from other Sunday schools whose work has thereby been crippled. After this attendance flurry is over they may return to their own schools.

The net result will be a loss in the output of both schools, and certainly no gain to the pupils.

This influx of new pupils will bring its problems of discipline, group consciousness, and social adjustments. While these should be faced and solved as a real educational process in every normally growing school, our "doubling campaign" has brought such an influx as to present insoluble problems in some cases. In no case is a normal, gradual, socializing process under way.

Teaching efficiency cut in two—

Congestion, oversized classes, inadequate equipment, decreased teachableness of the group as a whole due to the influx of "raw" material, cutting in on other Sunday schools, and the whole disturbed situation is certain to cut the teaching efficiency in two. In fact, it is questionable if teaching efficiency throughout the school on the climax day when 600 are present can possibly be kept up to half of what it was under normal conditions before the campaign. This means that we now have a teaching efficiency certainly not more than 5 per cent. To be ridiculously optimistic about it, let us grant that it may be 7 per cent. Our formula now is $7\% \times \frac{1}{3} \times 600 = 14$ units of output! One unit less than our original 15! But what of it? We have lost only about 6 per cent of our normal value to the Kingdom and we

"have broken all previous records." What a *great* school we have!

The reaction—

But alas, that isn't all. What attendance campaign, vigorous enough to double the attendance can possibly hold permanently all it wins? It will hold few of them unless it makes other provision through more high pressure attendance "spizzerinktum." As long as the attendance pressure is under way, teaching time and efficiency suffer. As soon as the attendance pressure lets up, the reaction sets in. Many schools slump back in a few weeks to an attendance smaller than before the campaign. Few maintain half of the new pupils gained. Even though in this case we do maintain half the new ones and go to a normal attendance of 450, the only way to gain a net increase in our output is to begin emphasis on something else than attendance. During the reaction attendance will be irregular, classes and pupils will worry about the slump, the morale of teachers and students will be low, and the whole teaching situation will be bad.

It will be found that the former teaching efficiency of 10 per cent can only be restored by an entirely different kind of campaign, one which has real educational objectives and principles. But this is another story. If you really want increased educational output the way to fool the

public and to fool yourself worst of all is to conduct a whirlwind attendance campaign in which the whole emphasis is on numbers. How to fool yourself? Just follow the leadership of those who have nothing to report but numbers.

When an attendance campaign is justified—

Regular attendance is a part of educational efficiency. A school which fails to secure regularity of attendance fails in educational efficiency. Regularity of attendance does not mean the same *number* of pupils, Sunday after Sunday. It means *the same pupils.* This kind of regularity is adequately stimulated only by interest in the work of the school. It follows teaching efficiency and is a contributing factor toward greater efficiency. A report which gives only the number of people present but does not give the percentage of *enrolled pupils* actually present has little significance. Any program which increases the regularity of enrolled pupils, other things being equal, increases efficiency and is legitimate. A program which strives merely to maintain or to reach a certain total regardless of *who* makes up that total is educationally blind. Such a school often consumes much of its energy drumming up new attendants to take the place of the large number whom its weak and ineffective teaching program is continually eliminating. Emphasis might far better be placed on a higher quality of teaching

which would stop this disastrous leak. Regularity of attendance always needs emphasis, but the most effective approach is educational rather than promotional. Teaching and administration should co-operate to secure regularity but success has little significance apart from effective teaching.

However, a general emphasis on attendance is justified under certain circumstances. A school which finds itself possessed of a teaching staff as well prepared for its task, grade for grade, as the corresponding public school staff is for its task; and also possessed of equipment which compares favorably with that of the public school, but finds that its enrollment is not large enough to employ fully this staff and equipment, is certainly justified in boosting attendance. However, the method used ought not to be sensational and non-educational such as a contest, for this would obscure the very educational interests and values which form the objective. Rather it should be in the nature of a recruitment or enrollment program, possibly using a community survey to discover the prospective students whose enrollment is most to be desired educationally. Emphasis upon regular attendance based upon direct educational motives rather than the artificial stimuli of attendance booms and contests, and gradual enrollment and assimilation of new students as

staff and equipment expand to take care of them constitute the maximum emphasis upon numbers which any educationally minded school will make.

The contest as a project—

A vigorous attendance drive stimulated by a contest or prizes may become a very interesting and attractive social project. It may enlist energies and personnel not being used otherwise. It is the cheapest and easiest way to bring a sense of achievement since the results are so tangible and self-evident. It may be argued that people might better become interested in the church and its school by this means than not at all. Perhaps this kind of "boosting" is the only kind of service activity in which some people can be enlisted. Might they not better do this than nothing?

"Doing things together" is, of course, the very method of teaching religion. Especially is it the best way to develop a "class spirit" or "school spirit." The interest, enthusiasm and sense of solidarity which develop in a good attendance contest are very desirable phases of class work and activity. However, if one properly grasps the project principle as applied to religious education, he will see that, while such a campaign is a very easy project to launch, it is, educationally about as near worthless as any project which might be undertaken.

In the first place, the only way in which it can

be carried through to completion successfully is to defeat the other side. "Our side" glories as much in handicaps which befall the rivals as in our own victories. A contest which does not develop intense rivalry is a failure as a contest. One which does is certainly a failure as a Christian project inasmuch as the spirit needed in Christian enterprises is co-operation rather than rivalry.

The contest may get service out of people otherwise inactive, but what about the motive prompting it? That is not a Christian project which is prompted by anything else than a genuinely religious motive. The contest does enlist such service or activity not by appealing to a dormant Christian motive but by appealing to a jungle motive already too little brought under the control of Christian ideals. The motive is not thereby made Christian. "Contest Christians" have little permanent value to church or school. In so far, therefore, as the contest enlists activity and energy otherwise dormant, it does so upon a false motive not related to true educational objectives.

The ethics of most contests which are really warm enough to be successful are so un-Christian as to condemn the whole enterprise of which they are a part. A contest was on between the men's classes of two large churches in a southern city.

The general manager of a great manufacturing plant who was a member of one class issued a bulletin to which his own name was attached urging all his men to attend the class which he was boosting. Of course, the men responded in great numbers. A "chief's" order means something! The police commissioner of the city was a member of the rival class. The following week he issued an official order to all members of the force available to report at the class in which he was interested on the next Sunday. Of course, this was shrewd contest tactics but it caused bitterness and recrimination as "unfair." Just how much religious value had such a procedure? Certainly a large number of men received a most erroneous and corrupt impression of what the church is about. Almost the only time some men go to church is under such pressure. Both they and the church are injured when they do go since they get an altogether false conception of the church and its mission. Little wonder they are immune to the normal and spiritual approach which the church is seeking by legitimate means to make to them. The false impressions of one such contest can destroy more than the careful constructive pastoral labors of years may rebuild. Imagine Jesus featuring an attendance contest between Capernaum and Nazareth!

One of the worst ethical as well as educational

features of contests is the degree to which they invade and break up the work of schools which are "innocent bystanders." In a certain southwestern city is a downtown Church school, the story of which is largely a tale of passing from contest to contest. In the same city is a university with excellent Sunday school classes of students. It is not unusual for the downtown church at the height of a contest to send a procession of automobiles to the college dormitories before Sunday school, drum the students up and haul them nearly all away for the class period, or at least long enough to count them. This is, of course, a lark for the students and a "great victory" for the downtown church but it practically breaks up the student Sunday school. Most contests work as vigorously on students of other schools as upon legitimate prospects. Schools practicing such ethics are a menace to the religious educational interests of a community and certainly to the comity and co-operation of the churches. Yet these practices are typical contest ethics.

Christian education is much in need of real projects about which activity may be organized. The contest or ordinary "whoop-it-up" attendance campaign is about the least valuable type of project imaginable. Community surveys, a

survey* of the complete educational program of the local church, the setting up of a standard of educational efficiency, getting better equipment, an "educational revival," a leadership training program, a Summer Camp or Conference program, a community recreational program, "gospel teams" and various types of service enterprises offer a wide variety of really educational projects, which, if properly promoted, will enlist far more permanent and valuable energies than a contest. Those who depend upon attendance campaigns as the means and method of realizing upon the values of the project principle are choosing a cheap and shoddy short cut which leads to educational disaster.

*See Bower, *A Survey of Religious Education in the Local Church.*

CHAPTER 10

A Plan Which Cannot Fail

"Advancement in cold figures"—

A STORY of advancement written in cold figures, when those figures refer only to attendance is not necessarily a story of the advancement of the Kingdom nor of the teaching program of Jesus. It may exalt the name of some teacher, preacher, promoter, or church. It may be great "publicity stuff." It is not necessarily Christian education. In fact, emphasis on numbers alone is so likely to detract from teaching efficiency and to obscure true religious educational objectives that educational output is likely decreased. In our last chapter we used "cold figures" together with facts familiar to every experienced Sunday school worker, to prove conclusively that it is impossible to increase the educational output of any ordinary school by an attendance campaign alone, no matter how successful it may be in actually increasing the mass size of the school.

The formula which determines educational output is: *Teaching efficiency* × *duration of teaching period* × *number of teaching periods* × *number of pupils* = *(weekly) educational output.* We saw

that a campaign to increase the last factor alone will, in the degree that it succeeds under ordinary circumstances, decrease the other factors more than enough to offset the gain in numbers. Therefore, any ordinary attendance campaign, valuable as it may be as an advertising scheme, pep generator, or promotional device, is in and of itself an enemy of genuine educational results. It controverts the method and emphasis of Jesus.

If doubling attendance will not work, we must select some other factor upon which to work. To double the number of teaching periods or double the length of the period would, other things being equal, double the output. With our present teaching efficiency, however, it is a question whether we could make a profitable use of much more time. Thirty minutes seems too long to many of our present teachers and they often have to fill up part of this with elements of little value just to "get by" in a respectable sort of way. Double the time and they would be helpless.

This leads to the conclusion that the only factor left upon which we can work with hope of real success in doubling our output is teaching efficiency. Suppose our teaching efficiency is 10 per cent, our teaching time one thirty minute period a week, and our attendance 300. Our weekly educational output is $10\% \times 1 \times \frac{1}{2} \times 300$

= 15 units (of spiritual influence and Christian living). Doubling teaching efficiency will certainly not decrease any of the other factors. If we can carry through to success a program to double our teaching efficiency, our formula will, other things being equal, be 20% × 1 × ½ × 300 = 30 units (of spiritual results). We have doubled our output in spite of the fact that we have no glowing statistical reports to make. If it is Christian education rather than publicity we are after, we have gained our objective. Does that satisfy our ambitions?

"But," you say, "that is all well enough for the 300 pupils we have already in our school. Granted we are meeting their needs twice as efficiently as before and so seeing double the results in their lives. I am not thinking only of this 300 whom we are now reaching so effectively. There lie upon my heart the spiritual needs of the hundreds of boys and girls and men and women not reached by our present program. Dare we concentrate selfishly on a highly efficient teaching ministry with these 300 and not organize with equal efficiency to bring in 300 more?

"To be sure, our attendance campaign will sacrifice the educational welfare of our present students some, but think of those it will reach who are now untouched by any religious educational influence. While it will hold most of

them for only the period of the campaign some will remain permanently and we trust all will be helped. Dare we go placidly on teaching our 300 and ignore the needs of another 300, some of whom might be won by an attendance campaign, if it is only vigorous enough?''

Very well. I, too, am thinking of the needs of the other 300 when I urge emphasis on teaching efficiency and question any value whatever in a mere attendance campaign. Experience shows that only a small proportion of those won in a campaign are held permanently. Also that those won and those already in the school suffer on account of the decreased educational efficiency caused by the campaign.

How Jesus valued mere attendance—

In thinking about the unreached hundreds I cannot ignore the attitude of Jesus toward the crowds nor can I question his wisdom. For me, he is the Great Teacher. Time and again he turned his back on the shallow minded and curious multitudes, great as their need was, in order that he might teach more intensively the few. The only attendance statistics he ever gathered were used not for a teaching program, but for a feeding ministry. Even when his heart yearned for the multitudes ''as sheep not having a shepherd'' his prayer and his proposed solution was not for more crowds or a better means of holding

those in attendance, but for "laborers unto the harvest," skilled workmen whose measure of success would be qualitative, not quantitative. The solution with Jesus rested back not on publicity methods or attendance devices, but teaching efficiency. He could afford to give his life and efforts to a few, if he could make real teachers of them, better than to a multitude who followed him "for the loaves and fishes." Beware of basing attendance on wrong or artificial motives.

Teaching efficiency fundamental—

Teaching efficiency is not merely one of the several factors which determine educational output. It is the basic factor, fundamental to all others. The whole educational structure rests on this foundation. If the foundation is weak, it will crumble and give way under a massive superstructure as in the case of successful attendance campaigns which are so disappointing in real educational results. If this foundation is strengthened first, it will support a massive superstructure. In fact, it will invite the erection of one.

Attendance results—

With our minds upon the needs of the unreached masses whom attendance campaigns seek to reach, and a few of whom may be really won thereby, let us see the bearing of our teaching

efficiency campaign upon them. To double the teaching efficiency of a given teacher and class, bringing it from 10 per cent up to 20 per cent is to work a tremendous change. One of the most marked differences will be a tremendous growth in the interest of the pupils. Good teaching always depends on the interest motive to solve most of its problems. Discipline, regular attendance, lesson preparation, participation in class activities: all these will be cared for by greatly increased interest. And this interest is not an artificial "loaves and fishes" interest, but a genuine educational interest with spiritual results.

This tremendous increase in interest, due to increased teaching efficiency makes attendance more regular and prompt, so bringing up the general average attendance. But it is also contagious. A class which becomes fascinating in its interest will draw new pupils. They will be won by the personal influence and interest of the present students. Once brought into the class they will remain and become an integral part of the group, both because of the contagious interest of their friends in the class and also because of their direct interest. Thus the class will grow slowly, naturally, continuously so that the inevitable outcome of a doubled teaching efficiency will be an increased average attendance. This

result will not be sudden and sensational. It will be gradual and educational. But it will be inevitable if there is material to draw upon.

No experienced Sunday school worker will deny that the better the teacher and the higher the general teaching efficiency the more likely the class will be to grow, and growth will come with little emphasis on artificial motives for attendance such as contests and drives. The poorer the teacher, the more dependence must be placed on these "loaves and fishes" motives. Of course, an appeal to loyalty to the school, the department, or the teacher is legitimate. But if there is not sufficient actual teaching efficiency to make the appeal to loyalty alone seldom necessary, loyalty is likely to be placed under a very heavy strain, too heavy for it to bear. It is not too much to say that dependence on contests and attendance drives to maintain and build up attendance is the mere subterfuge of a staff that cannot make good at its real job of teaching. Nor is it too much to say that adequate teaching efficiency will care for attendance through educational means with no emphasis on artificial motives.

To double the teaching efficiency in a period of say three years would very likely double the attendance, since an increase from 10 per cent to 20 per cent efficiency would be revolutionary. It

would release irresistible spiritual forces in the community. But let us be conservative and say that a doubled teaching efficiency would certainly mean an average attendance increase of fifty per cent.

Of course, since we are now thinking of teaching efficiency as fundamental we will not receive new pupils so rapidly as to decrease teaching efficiency. We will not permit crowding or too large classes. The motive which brings our new pupils since they come as a result of a leavening and spiritual process rather than an artificial campaign, will mean that their teachableness and the social situation in the class will be favorable to teaching efficiency rather than against it.

All these items are a part of teaching efficiency. To maintain our 20 per cent efficiency we must see that all these factors are cared for. That being done, the attendance will come. It will come more certainly than any attendance campaign could bring it. This may not all happen in a few weeks or months. But it will come and a fifty per cent increase is a very conservative estimate of it.

As a result of this increased attendance our formula will now be: $20\% \times 1 \times \frac{1}{2} \times 450 = 45$ units (of spiritual influence and Christian living). We have reached half of the "other 300" or as many as we could possibly have hoped to hold

permanently as a result of our attendance campaign. We have tripled our educational output as a result of doubling our teaching efficiency.

Increased time demanded—

No teacher and class will advance from a 10 per cent efficiency to a 20 per cent efficiency without feeling the serious limitations of the time available. Perhaps under the old 10 per cent efficiency some members of the staff found it hard to use the full half-hour educationally. They were embarrassed if they had a few minutes of extra time. Now, however, with doubled teaching efficiency, the time will always be too short for there will be so many interesting things to do and discuss, and the work undertaken will be so much more ambitious in its aim.

Some classes will be holding "through-the-week" sessions for certain activities. Others will seek an additional session Sunday evening or afternoon. All will become impatient of outside matters that encroach on class time. A very likely result will be the decision to extend the Sunday school session at least fifteen minutes, all of which will be added to the class period. The staff will insist also on the "opening exercises" being transformed into worship programs and becoming really educational.

With the inevitable demand for more time the actual teaching time and the time given now

to real educational activities will probably be nearer an hour a week than thirty minutes, considering through-the-week activities, worship programs carefully planned and kept free from non-educational features, and a lengthened class session. But again let us be conservative, counting on but half the probable increase. Say our teaching time per week is increased from 30 minutes to 45. Our formula now reads: $20\% \times 1 \times \frac{3}{4} \times 450 = 67.5$ units of educational output. By doubling our teaching efficiency and merely accepting the net results to other factors we have multiplied our output by four and a half!

Such results as these are not mere theory. They are being realized by an increasing number of Sunday school workers who have outgrown the old sensational interest in attendance statistics and are now concerned with genuine spiritual objectives.

It has been done—

I have actually observed carefully the work of one such school which had just completed a five year program of increased teaching efficiency. Previous to the adoption of this educational program the school under a revivalistic pastoral leadership had reached bumper attendance records on high days running into many hundreds. These were followed by the usual reactions. Five years before my visit the normal attendance was

less than four hundred. The teaching efficiency was probably under 8 per cent, and the teaching period was about 30 minutes a week. Since the educational program in this case has largely concerned the Elementary and Secondary divisions, a part of the adult department still using "brass band methods," we will consider only these departments. Five years ago the output would have been computed about like this: $8\% \times 1 \times \frac{1}{2} \times 250$ (below adults) $=$ 10 units.

An educational leadership was established and a teaching efficiency program instituted. Teaching efficiency due to trained teachers, a more carefully selected personnel, a modern educational plant, and an improved curriculum has unquestionably been more than tripled in the five years. Twenty-five per cent would be a fair estimate now. The attendance also has more than tripled, not by spasmodic drives but by gradual infiltration from the community due to the leavening influence of the pupils and the high standard of work maintained. The teaching period in the Elementary grades has been extended to two hours and in the secondary grades the full 75 minutes are thoroughly educational. The net amount of time used in a genuinely educational way has certainly tripled throughout all the grades. The present formula is conservatively stated as $25\% \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times 750 = 281.25$ units

of educational output, a little over 28 times that of five years ago! It is evident that our estimate of an increase of 450 per cent in output for a double teaching efficiency is very conservative since here we have an actual case of about 2800 per cent.

But how double the teaching efficiency? It can be done and this is our next story.

CHAPTER 11

How to Double Teaching Efficiency

The fundamental need—

THERE can be no net permanent improvement in a Sunday school which leaves out of account improvement in teaching efficiency. Increased numbers, and more or longer sessions if built upon a low teaching efficiency will crumble their foundation into educational ruins. Only upon the basis of a reinforced teaching efficiency can reinforcements anywhere else count.

Teaching efficiency consists of the ability and preparation of the teacher, teaching conditions, and the teachableness of the pupils. Thinking of 100 as the perfect measure in each of these factors we might say that a 10 per cent teaching efficiency may be analyzed into its elements somewhat as follows:

Christian personality and general preparation of the average teacher	10
Special religious educational preparation	5
Teaching conditions	10
Teachableness of pupils	15

Averaging these four elements the general teaching efficiency would be 10 per cent. We have already seen that a campaign to double at-

tendance will probably decrease the teaching efficiency by a third or more, so defeating any real increase in educational output. We have likewise seen that to double this teaching efficiency will, by a very conservative estimate, increase educational output by several hundred per cent. How can this efficiency be doubled?

How to get better teachers—

The first step is not to complain at the present situation or to berate faithful workers because they are not better qualified. It is rather to adopt a definite statesmanlike policy looking toward a better staff at a certain future date, and to adopt a program which will carry out the policy and secure the more highly qualified staff in due time. This can be done in any average community where there is a will to do it. Where it *can* be done it *ought* to be done, and those responsible for the religious educational program are failing in their obligation to youth and to the Lord of youth, if they are indifferent to such a need.

Set up a standard—

In the first place, get the ideal of a qualified staff before yourself and your school. Get it there in actual black and white, not merely in dreams. A qualified staff will measure up to certain standards. Of first importance is dynamic

Christian personality. Vitality, poise, attractiveness, moral vigor, tact, a co-operative, and a serious professional attitude toward the work are some of the qualifications needed by one who is to teach Christian living and personality to others. Define clearly what is meant by this highly important "personal equation." Let the educational committee and the superintendent have these qualities in mind in selecting a staff to be trained for the future and in grading the present staff.

You say we have no right to judge or grade one another on such intimate personal matters? How long would public school efficiency and morals be maintained if superintendents and school boards paid no attention to this personal equation? What executive in any enterprise can build up an efficient staff of workers without taking account of dynamic personality and moral character? How much more important it is in the Church school to define clearly and weigh fully this factor than anywhere else! We will not get a higher type of personnel until we define the type we want and then go after it.

The next element in the personal efficiency of the teacher is general educational background. Much grief comes to the church and to youth when our religious thinking is not kept abreast of our other thinking. Religion will break under

the strain of being taught to youth by teachers whose general educational qualifications are much inferior to those of their public school-teachers. The church contains hosts of men and women whose general education is fully equivalent to that of public school-teachers. If the Church school is now not manned by them, it is because the great teaching work of the church has never been put up to them in a big challenging way. A worthy standard will contemplate securing in time a staff equally well qualified, grade for grade, in general educational background with corresponding teachers in the public schools and colleges.

3. The final element in personal qualifications is that of special training for the teaching of religion. It is more difficult successfully to teach religion than any other subject because it is so fundamental and personal. No teacher can successfully meet the demands upon him without special training for the task. Such training is still in its infancy, yet through the Standard Teacher Training Course a most effective program of training is open to almost every teacher. The present standard course represents a minimum rather than a maximum of training for effective work, yet in hundreds of schools where a few leaders have taken but a portion of the courses, revolutionary changes are now under

way with vast increase in the educational output. Any worthy standard will contemplate the time when a standard diploma will be a necessary requirement for teaching in the Sunday school as it is in the public school. As an *ad interim* measure the requirement could well be, that sufficient training work be taken each year by each teacher to receive at least two standard credits.

Replacement of some teachers—

How will these standards operate to improve the local teaching staff? In the first place, the standard should be carefully worked out in the light of local conditions, plenty of time (three or five years) should be contemplated as the period during which there would be gradual improvement in the direction of the full standard, and the standard should be adopted after thorough study by the staff, the educational committee, the official board and the whole church. The adoption of such a standard is fully as important a congregational enterprise as the decision to build a new building or call a new pastor. In the long run it will be more significant than either of these.

The first result of its adoption to go into effect gradually will be one or two, perhaps more, resignations from the staff. While this may seem embarrassing at the time, nothing could be more wholesome than such a means of eliminating any

one who has so mean a conception of the teaching function as to object to an attempt to improve the staff. No teacher is necessarily responsible for personal shortcomings now, but he or she is certainly responsible for them if available means for overcoming them are refused and opposed. Such resignations should be accepted as evidence that the standard of qualifications is already operating successfully even though its full force may not be applied for five years.

The next result will be a new conception of the teaching function by some people in the church who have never been challenged by it. If you wish to get the most capable and influential people into a club or into a profession, make the conditions of entrance not easy but difficult. When the teaching staff becomes a hand picked group of qualified leaders, membership in it will be an honor and a privilege sought after by the best qualified people. Is this theory? There are actual instances in which schools or departments which had great difficulty in securing just enough teachers to go around when the only qualification was willingness, set up certain standards with the means for attaining them and in due time had waiting lists of qualified teachers looking for an opening to begin work!

Replacement of those most poorly qualified in personality and general education will raise the

general average of the personal equation in our 10 per cent school at least from 10 to 13 per cent.

Means of special training—

Replacement will affect an improvement only in a small proportion of our classes and departments. In the main our staff will be composed of about the same personnel. It should be. A general change or a sharp break with the past would be disastrous. The greatest improvement will come through training the present staff.

If the standard calls for two credits a year and a diploma in three or five years, means must be provided for doing this work. Correspondence courses, local training classes, Schools of Methods, Summer Training Schools, International Council or joint schools are various means by which the work can be done. Together with means for training the present staff, a group of younger prospective teachers must also be in training, probably by elective courses at the regular Sunday school hour. All of this can be done in the average church. If it *can* be done, it *ought* to be done.

Our 10 per cent teaching efficiency probably involved very little special training on the part of teachers. If none had received special or normal training, we would rate this factor at zero. We assumed, however, a little special training, say 5 per cent. A standard requiring two credits a

year and a diploma in five years would certainly raise this factor of special training from 5 to 40 per cent, with still further improvement through habits of reading religious educational books and magazines practically inevitable.

Teaching conditions—

If our standard demands certain qualifications of the teacher it must guarantee to that teacher such teaching conditions as will make possible effective use of those qualifications. It will, therefore, provide for gradual improvement in equipment and organization.

This will mean ultimately separate classrooms, with sound-proof partitions, adequate in size and comfort, and equipped with furniture and accessories needed in thorough work. The best available graded lessons will be used. Reference books, maps, models, pictures and notebooks will be available. A poorly qualified and untrained staff would be embarrassed by these facilities and would make little use of them preferring to stall along in the good old-fashioned way which has produced a generation of near spiritual illiterates. The surest and easiest way to secure all these means of a modern educational program is not to go after them directly, but to train a staff which will appreciate and demand them. They will be secured in response to this insistent and intelligent demand, and will be used to produce sur-

prising results. Our training program will probably result in doubling the efficiency of teaching conditions. Certainly the gain will be enough to raise our 10 per cent conditions to 15 per cent.

Teachableness—

Can teachableness of pupils be influenced by our program of increased teaching efficiency? Yes, in two ways. Better qualified and more interesting teachers aided by greatly improved teaching conditions will increase the regularity of attendance, the lesson preparation, and the favorable mental attitude of the pupils. Their increased respect for the Sunday school as a real school and for their teacher as one who really knows her business will work wonders in their general attitude.

Children are much more teachable than adults. Jesus held the child up as the model of discipleship. The Sunday school program which emphasizes numbers and sensational attendance methods invariably places great emphasis on adult classes and masses of adult attendance. The school which stresses educational quality of work prefers a preponderance of youth. It has a youth centered educational consciousness. By actual count it will be found that greater emphasis on teacher training and teaching efficiency will gradually increase the proportion of youth, especially Juniors, Intermediates, and Seniors, in the stu-

dent body. This has a decided tendency to increase the average of teachableness. A general increase from 15 per cent teachableness to 17 per cent is a conservative estimate of this increase.

A doubled efficiency—

Our program has touched every factor involved in teaching efficiency. Christian personality and general educational preparation has been brought by replacement from 10 to 13 per cent; special training by our training program from 5 to 40 per cent; teaching conditions, as a result of the requirements of better qualified teachers, from 10 to 15 per cent; teachableness by regularity of attendance, better attitude and larger proportion of youth from 15 to 17 per cent.

To summarize:

Factor	Old Standard	New Standard
Personal equation	10	13
Special training	5	40
Teaching conditions	10	15
Teachableness	15	17
	4)40	4)80
Teaching efficiency	10	20

No matter how poor or unpromising the situation, any school which will adopt and heartily and courageously seek to administer for three or

five years such a standard* for improvement as suggested here will find changes like these taking place in its teaching efficiency. The marvelous results in an expanded program of Christian education is another story which we must tell later. In the meantime, can the Church school set up standards of qualification for its teachers and enforce them without providing remuneration for such service? This is our next discussion.

*A standard for any type of school, the "one room," the "partly departmentalized," or the "fully departmentalized," which embodies these sound educational principles, and which has been carefully worked out by a curriculum committee and field staff may be secured from the publishers of this book.

CHAPTER 12

Should Sunday School Teachers Be Paid?

They must make good at any cost—

A STUPENDOUS load of responsibility rests upon Sunday school teachers throughout the land. Their essential place in spiritualizing the oncoming generation is widely and increasingly recognized. Conditions in the American home, the public school, and the community make the Sunday school the social, moral, and religious hope of the future, at least for this next generation.

Out of every hour which the average Sunday school pupil spends under the influence of a teacher, fifty-nine minutes are spent with the public school teacher in secular education. The other minute is spent with his Sunday school teacher in religious education. *That one minute carries a momentous load.* If the fifty-nine are spent with a well-qualified teacher who uses efficient up-to-date methods and thereby makes the work fascinating and vital, but the one minute is spent with an indifferently qualified teacher, untrained and traditional in her method, religious education breaks under the strain. The result is

a most effective negation of the whole religious factor in the pupil's life.

This has led to the conclusion that as rapidly as possible the Church school must provide teachers equally well qualified grade for grade with those in the public school. This can only come about by adopting a standard of qualification and gradually enlisting and training a staff which will measure up. Such a standard sets up certain requirements as to personality and character, dependability, general educational preparation, and special religious educational training. The question immediately comes up; Can a standard be enforced with a volunteer teaching staff? Is not the only hope of a qualified staff a paid staff so that there can be a financial recognition of qualifications and of successful work? If "The hand that writes the pay check rules the school," to use the late Mr. Bryan's slogan, can there be any "rule" in the absence of a "hand that writes the pay check"?

Advantages of a paid staff—

One of the greatest difficulties with Sunday school teachers is lack of dependability. Many are irregular in attendance, making no provision for their classes in case of absence. Supply or substitute teachers spend part of the period apologizing and the rest of it justifying their apology, with the whole performance pretty much of an

unethical bluff. Naturally pupils lose interest and become irregular. This irresponsible, unethical procedure on the part of many teachers vitiates much of what they do. This same attitude on the part of volunteer musicians frequently results in the employment of paid organists, pianists, and singers. Their music may not be much better, but at least they are dependable. If we recognize the special ability, training, and dependability of a singer by remuneration, why not apply the principle to the Sunday school teacher? Is it less important to disappoint children who come to be taught the "words of life" than to disappoint adults who like to be entertained by good music? Can the necessary professional attitude be secured except with a paid staff?

Without remuneration how can standards of qualification be enforced? If one is volunteering his services what right has anyone to say, "You must take some training work and do certain reading and attend Worker's Council or be replaced by some one who will"? Ought not those in charge of the Sunday school appreciate the service being freely given already without making further demands upon time and ability? If on the other hand qualified teachers were paid, it would be very simple to say to an unqualified member of the staff, "This remuneration is for

qualifications which you do not possess. You must either get them or give up the position to some one who has them." Thus standards could be enforced.

Any standard which is worth while presupposes general education, extended painstaking study, special training and a continuous investment of time to keep up-to-date. All this costs not only time but money. Can people be induced to make these substantial investments of time and money with no hope of material returns? Is it right to ask people with special talents and expensively acquired skill to render volunteer service? Do we not cheapen the whole program by putting it on a volunteer basis? As soon as a policy is adopted which makes such training a paying investment will we not get an adequate and well-trained staff? Can we expect to get one otherwise?

Of course it will be expensive, but what right has a church to pay its singers and not pay its teachers when the qualifications for the latter are or ought to be as high as for the former? If our present adult-centered (I almost said "adulterated") program were reconstructed around the ideals of Jesus, would it spend nearly all the budget on an adult program, and let the children get on under inefficient volunteer leadership? Financially the church can afford much larger

investments in youth. It is a question whether she can afford not to make them. If an efficient teaching program demands a paid staff, the church officiary which refuses to provide for it is disloyal to the Great Teacher. Such infidelity to Him unfits men for places of trust in the Kingdom! If the progress of Christianity in modern life demands such vast increases in church budgets as a paid teaching staff would involve, then adequate teaching in stewardship will provide the needed funds. Men who have called themselves "Christ's men" have this needed money and they will give it when they are made to see through the eyes of Kingdom statesmen. Christ's church can only be poor when all real Christians are poor.

The keynote of Christian living—

Indeed, stewardship is the very keynote of Christian living. There are real problems connected with a paid Sunday school staff, but they are not financial, they are spiritual, just as stewardship is more spiritual than financial.

The Christian life is an enlistment in service. A congregation succeeds spiritually only in a degree proportionate to the number of its members actually engaged in some kind of Christian service. Church membership is not service. It is merely becoming a candidate for service. It is spiritual nourishment to gain strength for

service. Even financial support is but the lowest form of service, being indirect. Jesus' own life was the very embodiment of the service ideal. They "follow afar off" who have not found some definite method by which their own lives embody this ideal as the great Christian objective.

Some find opportunity day by day to "give the cup of cold water" in the Master's name. Informal, casual contacts are used by them as the occasion for conveying to other lives the Master's healing, or cheering, or sustaining touch. For those who habituate themselves like good Boy Scouts to a "daily good turn" done in His name, vital growth in Christlikeness is inevitable.

Other Christians render their "bit" of service through the "Ladies' Aid," serving dinners to make dimes for the Lord, helping the pastor by calling, giving consecrated business ability to the financial or administrative affairs of the Church, and rendering various other kinds of "church service." The weakness of most churches is that much of this work is done in an inefficient manner and at a cost of time and effort out of proportion to actual results secured. Yet there is no problem greater, especially in the large congregation, than to find actual, worth-while service which can engage the consecrated energies of a larger proportion of the membership. "Ser-

mon soaked pagans of the pew'' are today the church's greatest liability. A program of volunteer service activity, enlisting larger numbers, is her brightest hope.

Dangers in professionalism—

The modern church needs a professionally trained leadership. Only by making it possible for experts in the pastoral and educational field to earn their livelihood by such professions can an adequately trained leadership be secured. Full-time Christian callings, which become means of support, are not necessarily any more ''Christian service'' than many so-called secular vocations. It is only when a minister or teacher goes beyond the service for which he is materially compensated, that he enjoys the ''glory of the second mile.'' Many professional Christian workers either accept less compensation or work harder than they would in a ''secular'' vocation. If a minister or Christian educator renders no such margin of ''second mile'' service, or if he renders it grudgingly, ever conscious of being either underpaid or overworked, he is a doubtful asset to the Kingdom, and denies himself all the keen delight of the ''second mile.''

In other words the glory of consecrated Christian service begins only at the point where commensurate material compensation leaves off. ''They have received their reward,'' said Jesus

about all those religionists who were forever taking care that they were given full credit for their "consecration." There is only one danger greater than the present lack of an adequate volume of Christian service pouring forth from normally Christian lives. It is that this volume be increased by the professionalizing of Christian service. Whenever consecrated money is used to pay for service which should be rendered voluntarily by consecrated life, spiritual values are in danger. The whole glorious adventure of dedicated life is made tame and secular. The hope of the Kingdom is in larger, not smaller, proportionate volumes of voluntary service. The real glory of the church today is in a ministry and missionary force rendering service all out of proportion to its compensation, and in a vast and increasing volume of volunteer service being rendered by consecrated laymen.

Now the greatest single volume of this voluntary service today is being rendered, not by the Ladies' Aid, the Women's Missionary Society, or the Official Board. It is being rendered by the Sunday school staff. In numbers engaged, hours of service rendered, and total spiritual results, no other type of service compares with it. In most churches the first to deserve and the last to expect a "distinguished service medal" would doubtless be some teacher or officer in the

Church school. This quiet, unassuming, often unrecognized service, week after week and year after year, is second to none other in significance. In fact there are many churches in which little other actual constructive volunteer service is being rendered except this. To place this service on the pay roll would be to steal away the greatest single opportunity for voluntary service available. In spite of its apparent advantages it would do irreparable spiritual damage.

A test of Christ's power—

Long ago the Master had power to enlist people in voluntary service for which they were willing to qualify at any personal cost, and which they were willing to render at any personal sacrifice. Has he lost that power over the hearts of his disciples? If he has, then he must be dead and his promised presence and power only a myth. But he is not dead! He is calling today to those who will enlist in his great teaching fellowship with dedicated ability, dedicated time, and dedicated preparation.

Mary Jones might be a good teacher but she is irregular in attendance and unreliable in assuming responsibility. But for three dollars a week she will become regular and reliable. If that is the price of her devotion is she worthy a place in His teaching fellowship? James Smith is willing and able to teach but will not attend Worker's Council and keep in touch with school

and departmental plans and policies. For ten dollars a month he will attend. Is he worth it? Mrs. Brown is faithful and has had long experience (with traditional methods). She sees no need of teacher training or a course of reading. If these new fangled "standards" require it she will resign first. Except, of course, that if she is paid twenty-five dollars a quarter for teaching, that's different. She will qualify. Can she? Brother Henry has been to college and taken some religious education courses. It costs money to go to college. He is working night and day to pay off college debts. He cannot give time enough to become a departmental superintendent unless it will mean twenty-five dollars or so a month to him. But we must have him, even if it does cost that much. He is so well qualified! Is he? Miss Blank is a very capable public school-teacher and an ardent Christian. But she teaches all week and does need Sunday off so much. Of course if it means fifteen dollars a month more salary she can do it all right. Can she?

Can a paltry pay check enlist greater dependability, more thorough preparation, heartier cooperation, and higher abilities than the Master of men is able to? If so, Almighty Dollar, we worship you! Even in the church of Christ you are the supreme deity. He is merely a figure-

head. Will modern Christians render a half-hearted, poorly prepared, undependable teaching service when their only reward is spiritual, but an efficient, reliable, well-prepared service when a material reward is substituted?

The hope of the Kingdom is in a teaching staff so consecrated to a high and holy ministry that no secular vocation will outdo them in reliability, in preparation, or in willingness to serve regardless of reward.

In some schools a legal appearing document very similar to a public school-teacher's contract is being used effectually to make concrete and definite the vows taken and obligations assumed by those entering the teaching fellowship. This Teacher's Contract offers a spiritual reward in place of a financial one. Is it not just as binding on the truly dedicated teacher?

The present power of Christ over the hearts of his disciples is sufficient to enlist such service without the aid of material rewards once the teaching function of the church is glorified as it should be. The church at large owes an obligation to her teachers but it is not financial. In the next chapter let us discover what it is and how to discharge it.

CHAPTER 13

What the Church Owes Her Teachers

A professional staff—

THE traditional ministry of the church has been a preaching and pastoral ministry. With the modern emphasis on education as the fundamental method of social stability and progress, the church is reconstructing her program, placing much larger dependence upon religious education as her chief method of evangelism and social influence. The larger churches are employing a professional educational ministry known as the Director of Religious Education. Smaller churches, able to employ only one professional full-time worker, are expecting him to be qualified to lead an educational as well as a pastoral and pulpit program. Modern religious education needs this technically trained professional educational leadership to insure adequate and skillful administration and supervision. Thus a full-time professional educational ministry is developing.

Week-day religious education, where carried on co-operatively, with favorable schedule arrangements, is able to employ trained teachers

for a large part or all of their time. This program will not likely be carried on permanently and successfully except by an employed staff of specially trained workers. Volunteer teachers can scarcely be expected to give adequate time and preparation to carry such a program except as a temporary makeshift measure.

The Vacation Church School occupying a considerable solid block of time is likely to find it most satisfactory to employ, at least, the four or five group leaders, depending for their assistants upon volunteer service. Such an intensive program making greater demands on the teacher in a month than the Sunday school does in a year will likely break down without some employed, technically trained leadership.

In advocating remuneration for these leaders we are robbing them of none of the glory of service. Compensation is necessary for such full-time ministries, since only thus could their material necessities be cared for, enabling them to secure adequate professional training and give full-time service. Their glory in "second mile service" will always come from doing far more than that for which they are compensated materially, real service beginning when they move out into the margin beyond the range of the actual duties for which they are expressly employed and paid.

Avocational specialization—

We have outlived the day of the "jack-of-all-trades." The genial blacksmith who used to run the Post Office, was also a veterinary surgeon, the township clerk and, during a few winter months, the school-teacher, is now doing none of these things. Vocational specialization is the only gateway to success in the life of these complex days. "You can't have everything." Neither can you do everything.

Modern life has even gone beyond vocational specialization. Today there are so many worthwhile and fascinating things which one can do in leisure time that even with our shorter working day and increased leisure we are in such a nervous whirl from one activity to another that we put little into any of them and get less out. Church workers especially find their spare time crowded with a confused succession of desirable activities. Time for rest and meditation is gone. Even the working day is less strenuous than the "leisure hours."

Rational living demands avocational specialization just as insistently as vocational specialization. It has become necessary to select from the many worth-while things one would like to be doing the one most worth while and deliberately close the door against the others. Only so can one's avocation yield satisfaction and enrich-

ment. Even in church work one must select the one type in which he will specialize and cheerfully abandon others in the interest of efficiency.

There is no more rewarding and fascinating avocation for the Christian than teaching and leading a group of growing young Americans in the Church school. Adventure, change, thrills, achievements, spiritual growth, permanent satisfactions, and results: what other avocation can equal it in these rewards? The successful Church school teacher has seen these high values, has deliberately chosen this type of avocational specialization, and has cheerfully ruled out all sorts of other interesting and worth-while things. Like that pearl merchant of old, he has made a wise investment even if at great cost. Congratulations, you who have selected your avocation in the teaching fellowship of the Master Teacher! Do it deliberately and consciously and have no regrets for the loss of lesser avocations.

A service beyond price—

Having deliberately chosen teaching in the Church school as the one avocational interest of highest worth, Church school teachers qualify to render the greatest volume of volunteer Christian service rendered by any group. Supported materially by some other source, they pour out unstinted service lovingly, loyally, and effectively as the greatest single gift to the Kingdom.

There is nothing else in the world like it. Such devotion could not be purchased by material reward. It is the unimpeachable evidence of the control of the Christ ideal in thousands of hearts.

In the main, this service will not be less loyal and efficient because its only compensation is the "hire of souls." The kind of people who are qualified spiritually for this holy ministry would not be better qualified by accepting material compensation. That would only tarnish the luster of their glorious service now so freely given. The church does owe her army of volunteer teachers a great obligation, but it is not financial. It can never be paid in silver and gold. Theirs is a service in its very nature beyond price.

Appreciation—

The church's first obligation to her teachers is one of appreciation. Let their service be rated as a more valuable and a more costly gift than money. If generous contributors have large influence in shaping congregational policies, then let the influence of teachers be proportionate to their offering, larger than that of any other group.

The supreme need of most congregations is a genuine educational consciousness. The Sunday school is not a mere appendage or special agency of the church, the concern of a superintendent

and a few teachers. The work of the Sunday school is the church's teaching program, and if the fundamental method of Jesus was teaching, it is her very central function. Once let the entire congregation become conscious that this basic work of the church is being carried by the Sunday school staff, and these loyal folk will come to be appreciated as the very pillars of the church herself. They do not ask for financial remuneration for their devoted service. They do ask strong moral support and they deserve it.

Co-operation—

The teaching staff in the modern Church school carries a part of the load which properly belongs to the parents and the home. The decentralization of activities from the home through the development of specialized agencies in modern society has carried with it some functions that the home cannot well relinquish. Among these, religious nurture is chief. Just in the present crisis the Church school is staggering under almost the entire responsibility for the religious training of the children, even of Christian parents.

Certainly, the least the parents can do justly is to back every effort made by the Church school teachers to carry the load. Regularity and punctuality of attendance, some interest in home study, and strong moral support of the teacher

are the clear duty and privilege of every parent. The Church school teacher who does not have full and hearty co-operation from parents is not having a fair show. Such parents are doubly negligent.

Teaching conditions—

Teaching efficiency demands favorable teaching conditions. The extremely limited time of the Sunday school makes ideal conditions all the more imperative. There is no time to spare.

Good teaching conditions require certain standard equipment as to separate rooms, space, light, heat, ventilation, adapted furniture and working materials. As public school conditions improve, Church school conditions must keep pace or the church and Christianity suffer by comparison in the pupil's mind, either consciously or unconsciously. A worker's library stocked with the latest carefully selected books and magazines should be available for use. Office service such as typist, mimeograph, postage, and addressograph are legitimate needs. The best curricular materials in abundance are essential. The devoted service of the teacher, voluntarily and generously given, can only be fully capitalized in results, if such equipment be supplied. Otherwise he works as a woodman with a dull axe, laboring harder but accomplishing less than as though he were properly equipped.

No church is playing fair with its teachers if it fails to take account of these needs in its regular budget. To allow teachers to furnish items of equipment at their own expense in their desperate need, is to penalize their devotion. To allow them to beg and implore in vain for better teaching conditions while other expenditures are being made is to mock their efforts. No qualified teacher is asking to be paid for his or her service. But every qualified teacher is pleading for a chance to do effective work. Their desires are not mere whims or hobbies. They are the deepest needs of the church. The congregation at large is under imperative obligation to match their devotion with adequate provision for real school work. Those who teach discharge their educational obligation in that way. Those who do not teach can only discharge theirs by seeing that every desirable teaching condition is provided.

With higher standards of qualification demanded of Church school teachers, their investments of time, ability, and preparation become heavier. The church at large can well expect that higher standards of work will demand heavier investments in equipment and upkeep. Let those who do not teach prepare equally with those who do to meet, each in his own way, these increasing demands of Christ's advancing Kingdom.

Provision for training—

The setting up of standards of qualification for Church school workers places them under necessity of special training. If they are not to be materially compensated for this professional service, which they will be equipped to render, then certainly the church should provide fully and generously for their training.

Classes for prospective teachers under expert leadership should be under way continuously. Classes for teachers in service should be provided under skilled leaders. Here is a legitimate place for financial investment. Let the church provide at any necessary expense the finest available leadership for this special training. If the average church would substitute for about every other "revival meeting" which it holds, an "educational revival," making an equal investment for an equally vigorous and intensive campaign in religious education, the church would be permanently vastly better off and would at the same time discharge an unquestioned obligation to its teachers. A genuine educational program is not necessarily cheaper than revivalistic evangelism, but it is vastly more effective and permanent.

There are available Summer Conferences, Institutes, Training Schools and College Summer Schools which have tremendous training value for local staffs. The church owes her teachers

regular training, at church expense if necessary, in such schools. Conventions, observation trips to other schools, and attendance at Schools of Methods involve expenses which the church at large should cheerfully bear in helping to train her teachers. In other words, the general principle is that the church should not necessarily compensate her teachers for service rendered, but she should provide fully for their special training and for keeping alive the professional spirit.

When the church as a whole pays to her teachers her legitimate obligation of appreciation, cooperation, provision of teaching conditions, and provision for training, the Church school will become in very truth the school of the whole church in which all have part and in which all render glorious service. This makes possible the vastly expanded religious educational program of the future which will be our next concern.

CHAPTER 14

Expanding the Program

President Coolidge says—

"WE do not need more material development, we need more spiritual development. We do not need more intellectual power, we need more moral power. We do not need more knowledge, we need more character. We do not need more government, we need more culture. We do not need more law, we need more religion. . . .

"In our efforts to minister to man's material welfare we must not forget to minister to his spiritual welfare. It is not enough to teach men science; the great thing is to teach them how to use science. . . .

"An education which does not accomplish this result is not a real education. It may provide a higher degree of cunning, a more intensified selfishness, and may add another prehensile claw with which to lay hold of the things of the world, but unless it results in the cultivation of the higher nature, unless it strengthens the spiritual power, unless it develops into real character, it will be without any final satisfaction. . . .

"It was not education that founded religion,

but it was religion that founded education. It was beside the place of worship that there grew up the school. . . .

"It would be exceedingly difficult to overestimate the important part that teachers take in the development of the life of the nation. They exercise their art, not on the materials of this world which pass away, but upon the human soul, where it will remain through all eternity. It is the teacher that makes the school, that sets its standards and determines its success or failure. . . .

"Without the presence of a great directing moral force, intelligence either will not be developed or, if it be developed, it will prove self-destructive. . . .

"Real wisdom will not be developed by pursuing a method of education that leaves out of consideration the human soul, nor will real prosperity arise by relying upon a materialism which leaves out of consideration human ideals. . . .

"There is no surer road to destruction than prosperity without character."*

America's need—

The above striking utterances taken from various adresses by Calvin Coolidge indicate a point of view which is becoming widespread among interpreters of American life. A similar

*America's Need of Education, Calvin Coolidge.

array of quotations could be taken from the public utterances of Warren G. Harding, Woodrow Wilson, and others of our recent national statesmen and leaders. Testimony from leading sociologists such as Dr. Ellwood of the University of Missouri, and from nationally known educators, scientists, and business experts, could be assembled to support this plea for greater emphasis upon spiritual values. Surely Christian leaders, themselves, must sense this intense need most keenly of all. The spiritual and moral element must be made more prominent in the education of American youth.

There is no immediate hope for this emphasis by looking to the American home. Domestic readjustments are under way as a result of profound social changes in our recent life which leave the average home confused and hesitant as to its religious responsibilities. Co-operation of the home must be enlisted, but the whole responsibility cannot safely be left there at present.

There are tremendous latent spiritual resources in the public school. In so far as the church furnishes from among her choicest youth, Christian public school-teachers, positive spiritual values will be realized in the school. However, there can be no religious qualifications set up for public school-teachers at large, and no adequate means can be provided them, under American

conditions, to carry out a program of religious education. The co-operation of the public school must be enlisted, but responsibility for adequate religious education cannot be placed there.

A bewildering number of volunteer agencies have arisen to try to meet some phase of this spiritual need. The Boy and Girl Scouts, the Camp Fire Girls, the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. with their age group programs, the playground movement, and various local clubs and societies have attacked the problem more or less effectively from various angles. None, however, has a complete and adequate program for any group, and none meets the needs of all ages. The revised version of an ancient expression of confidence, "When my mother and father forsake me, then the Boy Scouts will take me up," is no adequate basis for hope.

There is just one agency in the American community which can shoulder this responsibility in an efficient and comprehensive way. The Church school is the hope of the spiritual future of America. Whatever may have been the traditional place of the Sunday school, current opinion from many sources is lifting it to a place of new dignity and importance, not only in the program of the church, but in the life of the community and the nation. Is the Church school equal to this challenge?

More time needed—

Religious development is conditioned by every influence which plays upon growing life. The time of the regular typical Sunday school pupil is distributed somewhat as follows each week:

Home activities,	42 hours
Community and playground,	35 hours
Public school,	30 hours
Sleep,	60 hours
Sunday school,	1 hour

It is the same spiritually responsive, eager, inquisitive, unfolding personality which responds to the life situations met in the 107 hours spent in home, public school, and community or playground activity as responds to the situations in the one hour spent in the Church school. Can a less than one per cent program carry the responsibility for spiritualizing the 99 per cent program? It would take a foolishly optimistic religious leader to believe it. The Church school program must expand to occupy effectively a larger proportion of the pupil's time.

Increased numbers—

But only one out of every three of our Protestant American youth is touched even by this one per cent program. And the attendance of these is so irregular as to discount considerable even

of this influence. It is through no lack of emphasis on numbers and attendance drives that the others are not reached. Most of them have been at some time enrolled in some class or Sunday school. They have failed of permanent enlistment for lack of a sufficiently vital and intensive approach to their needs and interests on the part of Sunday school workers. The Church school program must reach and hold permanently a larger proportion of our youth.

Closer correlation—

It is the purpose of the limited experience passed in the Church school to qualify and enrich the larger experience spent in all other environments. To do this, the Church school program and curriculum must be closely related to all the rest of life. It must not be an experience apart from normal everyday life, but a cross section of that life lifted into the very presence of the Lord of life and shot through and through with those ideals and motives which have their source in him alone. This demands an expansion of the interests and activities of the Church school into everyday matters so that religious education will stand in no danger of being merely a "Sunday school affair."

The expanded Sunday session—

The demand for increased time and an enriched program is being met by some of the most

successful leaders by expanding the Sunday session in the Elementary Departments from an hour to two or two and a half hours. This makes provision for carefully prepared worship programs, supervised study, drill, and various activity enterprises of service, play, investigation, and meaningful handwork. This expanded session enables the pastor to give the first hour to whatever contacts he can make effectively with the children in the various groups, making him their pastor as well as the pastor of their parents. The expanded program parallels the adult church service, making the same amount of provision for children as for adults. The total morning session may reach its climax at the close with all departments above the Primary in a grand assembly for the Lord's Supper. This great worship and communion experience offers the best opportunity for the common participation of all age groups. Or the communion service for Juniors may form a part of the Junior worship program, if desired. The expanded session, even if it does not affect any other factor, doubles the educational output by doubling the time element and enriching the curriculum. It should never be undertaken, however, until careful and continuous preparation has been made, and a well qualified staff is provided.

The Vacation Church School—

This is the simplest way of doubling the present available time and enriching the curriculum. It usually enlarges the constituency also. But the Vacation Church School, with its intensive program, its enriched and diversified curriculum and its continuous block of time, makes heavy demands on the teacher. With trained leadership it offers few problems. With only unskilled leaders it multiplies problems and is a questionable venture.

Week-day religious education—

It remains to be seen whether this rapidly spreading movement is a fad or a religious renaissance. In many communities it bears all the ear marks of a fad and has been launched on such a flimsy foundation that permanence and real educational merit seem impossible. In other cases, there is evidence of serious recognition of the responsibilities and problems involved, and a disposition to face them with statesmanship and courage. The week-day religious education movement, if it does not grow faster than a trained leadership is made available and employed, may become the greatest ally of the Sunday school. The advantages in the way of closer correlation with the public school, of additional time, and a wider and more regular constituency are unquestionable.

What shall we do first?—

This elaborate program of a two or three hour Sunday session, four to six weeks of intensive Vacation Church School work, and two to four hours of week-day religious education make a provision that challenges the imagination. This begins to appear adequate to give religion its proper place in education and in growing life.

But every advance step in this expanding program depends ultimately upon a qualified teaching staff. If present equipment is adequate for a thoroughgoing program, little need be added, except as numbers grow. The expanded program simply makes three or four times as much use as is now being made of the very same equipment. Face the problems from every angle and they come back ultimately to the one problem of qualified leaders. The first step then is a far more vigorous program of leadership recruitment and training.

The second step will be to raise the quality of work being done in the present 60 or 75 minute Sunday session. There is no use of expanding a program which is already thin and weak. The best way to expand is simply to outgrow present time limits by the very excellence and richness of the work. Let new wine threaten to burst the old wine skins. It would be very foolish to expand to two hours or more until every minute in

the present schedule is being used educationally and intensively.

The third and fourth steps will be to expand and enrich the present Sunday session and to provide a Vacation Church School. Either may precede the other according to the most available leadership.

The fifth and last step is to begin week-day religious education. This should be started only after the other phases of the expanding program are all functioning effectively. The church has no right to ask the public school or the child for more time until she is making a thoroughly educational and spiritual use of all the time now at her disposal.

With this expanding program providing time, reaching larger numbers, and integrating religious education with education and life in general the church will measure up to her responsibility and produce a generation fit for the Kingdom of God. Is the future bright or dark? Let us see.

CHAPTER 15

Buying Up the Future

Has the church failed?—

"GO ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." These were the parting words of Jesus and the marching orders of his disciples. "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," he said of his church in sublime optimism. Have the high hopes of Jesus been realized?

Today there are probably more people in the world who have never heard of him than there were when he said those words. His church has grown, to be sure. But it has not kept pace with the growth of population. Over sixty generations have come and gone since the Great Commission was given and the vast majority of every generation have lived in the same world, breathed the same air, and shared the same varied human experiences with his disciples, but have never heard of him. Never since the first few decades of its history has his church grown fast enough to hold its own with increasing pop-

ulation. Which means that, at the present rate the *Kingdom will never come.* Yet he hoped for it, longed for it, died for it, taught his disciples confidently to pray for it. Was it merely an impossible dream or is there yet hope?

Isaiah had looked forward across the centuries to the day when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea." Jesus faced the shrouded and unknown future with victorious confidence and undiscouraged optimism. Those early disciples caught his buoyant spirit and accepted the Commission with assurance and enthusiasm. Paul confidently heralded the approaching consummation when the command should be fulfilled that "every knee should bow . . . and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Yet of the sixty generations since the full gospel has been known to man, not one has been half evangelized to say nothing of being brought into full allegiance to our Lord. Has the church failed?

Even in the so-called Christian nations but a fraction of the people openly confess him and profess to live by his Way. Vast areas of human activity and relationships such as are involved in industry, commerce, politics, and recreation remain either blatantly pagan or only nominally Christian thereby neutralizing much of the spir-

itual influence exerted by Christian individuals here and there.

Of these Christian individuals who have attended church regularly and done all that good churchmanship seemed to require, few are qualified by training or experience to render any very efficient or significant service in an aggressive Kingdom program. While many may have been "saved," how many have then been trained to become an aggressively saving factor in society?

"How utterly we have failed here (in religious education) is suggested by the following comparison which is statistically accurate. If the public schools had been no more efficient in teaching literacy than the Church schools in teaching religion, two-thirds of the population of the United States could not read a newspaper, sign their names to a check, or add up their own grocery bill. A majority of the remaining third would not have advanced far beyond the primer and the multiplication table."*

Both quantitatively and qualitatively the church of the past and present seems to be weighed in the balance and found wanting. To be sure, glorious victories have been won. The church today is a powerful social and spiritual

*R. W. Frank, "Religious Leadership and Its Present Day Task." *International Journal of Religious Education*, March, 1926.

force. What other institution compares with it? *Yet the measure of success is not what has been accomplished; it is that proportion of the total task which remains unfinished.* When the achievements of his disciples in any and all generations are compared with what their Lord expected of them and hoped might be realized through them, their failure is appalling. The church has not failed utterly, but her successes have been only sufficient to reveal her unlimited and unused resources which would make success complete, if they were but drawn upon to the full.

"If I could just catch up once"—

Near my boyhood home lived a family known far and wide for the revolting filth in which they lived. As a housekeeper the woman was a picturesque failure. More careful attention was paid to order, cleanliness, and efficiency in the barn than in the house. She once explained her difficulties to a caller by saying that she was always about a day behind with her work. "If I could just catch up once and get everything cleaned up and put away I could keep house as well as anybody. But I can never get my work done up and so I just have to put in my time climbing over things, scraping yesterday's dishes, and trying to clean up last week's washing. If

I could just have one extra day to catch up in, I could do my work so much easier."

A farmer near by suffered under the same handicaps. He never got his fall plowing done because he was always too late with his harvest and corn husking. This made his spring work so heavy that his seed was never planted until that of his neighbors was up and under cultivation. Late seeding gave the weeds a start and his cultivating was always two or three weeks behind. Not infrequently he lost an entire crop by being so tardy with it. Of course, his harvest was never ready on time; he could not get his threshing done when the threshing machine was in the neighborhood and had no end of trouble getting it done at the close of the season. Usually his crop was overripe and being wasted before it was harvested. Frequently fall rains caught him with a part of it uncared for and it was ruined. By the time his crop was ready to market, the roads were muddy and he was forced to haul small loads which took longer. This kept him overworked until winter had set in with no fall plowing done. He could not get his winter's supply of firewood cut a season ahead and consequently cut wood from day to day for immediate needs. This wood was "green" and less satisfactory than dry wood, though more of it was required so he was always

cutting wood night and morning. He worked longer hours, worked harder, and raised smaller crops than any of his neighbors. "If I could only catch up just once," he would say, "everything would be all right. But I'm always about a season behind with my work and it makes it that much harder. I can never get my seeding done in time unless I can get my fall plowing done. I cannot get my fall plowing done with harvest so late. And I cannot get at my harvest earlier without getting my seeding and cultivating done in time. But my seeding is late because my plowing all has to be done in the spring."

Now, of course, this inefficient housewife, and this inefficient farmer were victims, not of circumstances as they thought, but of their own indolence and mismanagement. An extra day or an extra season would not have solved their problems. Only a program of getting each task done in its season to make way for the next would do this. Work pushed over from day to day or season to season always costs more effort and yields smaller returns than work done at the proper time.

Up to the present time the church has been about as successful and efficient as these pitiable neighbors. It has expended most of its time and energies trying to overcome the tragic results of earlier neglect, and, the while, has further per-

petuated the policy of neglect. An adequate program of Christian nurture reaching one entire generation would produce a Christian social order. But how can such a program be provided in a social order which is not already Christian? We cannot produce a generation of youth with proper home training until we first produce a generation of ideal parents. But we cannot produce these ideal parents without ideal homes. And ideal homes will never be set up until we produce a generation of parents who have been trained in such homes. "Which came first, the hen or the egg?" becomes our inscrutable problem.

"Buying up the opportunity"—

Whatever Paul meant by this phrase in the Ephesian and Colossian letters it seems to suggest a principle which we need here. "Buying up the future" may be even more to the point. The disappointing achievements of the church both quantitative and qualitative are due to the fact that the most favorable opportunities have usually been neglected and most of her energies have been consumed in working against the handicap of these wasted opportunities.

A program devoted chiefly to adult evangelism is loaded with as much inefficiency and indolence as a farming program which finishes its seed-sowing during harvest days, and allows the

snows of winter to destroy its real harvest. The church's failure, generation after generation, is due to this shortsighted, hand-to-mouth policy. Only when some generation of Christian leadership awakens to the folly of this belated policy and puts forth a supreme effort to organize the resources of the Kingdom around the well defined "seasons of the soul" will the church begin to "catch up" with her work and realize full value for effort expended.

Every wise real estate investment, every keen business venture, every plan for the building of a home, or the securing of an adequate income, or the acquisition of personal skill is an investment in the future. "Buying up the future" with the resources of today is the guarantee of success in any venture. Spending all of today's resources on hand-to-mouth existence is to invite failure, however rich life may be for the moment. Only when the church has the courage to make her chief investment in youth rather than in adulthood can she hope for success.

As long as the church consumes her chief energies and resources in a program of adult revivalism, she is forsaking today's work to try in vain to mop up the mess left by yesterday's neglect. Tomorrow will be used to wallow hopelessly through the squalor caused by today's indolence. Her house will never be in order

until the day that sufficient reinforcements are marshalled to care for today's task as well as to clean up after yesterday's neglect.

As long as the church devotes her chief energies working frantically to save a few fag ends of the long overripe harvest, most of which is already wasted, instead of putting her soil in order to plant, cultivate, and harvest a new crop while it is yet time, she will be as a negligent and slothful husbandman.

Some generation, while not neglecting the attempt to atone for yesterday's belated policy, must make the heroic endeavor likewise to buy up the future by a program of religious education far beyond anything yet attempted. Many leaders are seeing in our own generation the hope and prospect of such an endeavor.

We believe in education—

The typical American community spends more for its schools than all other community enterprises combined. Not infrequently the school tax is one-half to two-thirds the total tax assessed. This means that the American community believes enough in the education of its youth to make heavier investments here than in all other public enterprises. New York City has one high school, the grounds for which cost $750,000, the building $3,000,000, and the equipment $850,000. This is but one of her forty-six

high schools. One out of every three of our American youth of high school age is in school. We believe in education. We propose to solve our great public problems by this method.

The typical American church spends less for its religious educational program than for several other items. In many churches janitor service, special music, or a pastor's stenographer represents a heavier investment than the total educational program. A revival meeting of a few weeks may take out of the congregation more money than the educational program for a whole year. This failure to buy up the future by adequately taking advantage of the youthful "seasons of the soul" loads the next generation with handicaps of neglect and failure.

The typical American church is far less Christian in its attitude toward youth than is the American community as a whole. Jesus placed the "child in the midst." The community is coming to his attitude. The church which has sometimes been called the "mother of education" is today allowing the state to outstrip her in emphasis on education and on youth.

A reconstructed program—

The objectives of the church are much the same from generation to generation. They are set by the Commission from her Lord. But the method of the church must change from age to

age in accordance with new situations. Missions, social service, civic righteousness, personal evangelism: all these worthy phases of church work must be carried forward. The one method by which all can be cared for adequately today is that of religious education.

The crying need of the hour, therefore, is for a complete reconstruction of the church's program, making religious education her central function and method. The church has tried various other vigorous emphases. Great waves of adult evangelistic fervor, impassioned foreign missionary drives, vigorous campaigns of social reform backed by legal enactment, and challenging social service enterprises have swept successively over the church commandeering her best energies. None has brought the Kingdom very near. The insurmountable obstacle of every one has been the lack of an adequately prepared generation, spiritually and intellectually, to carry through the program laid out and the ideal set up. Let the church of today, therefore, make her substantial investments in and stake her hopes upon such a program of religious education as shall buy up the future and provide a fund of spiritual capital a generation hence which will substantiate unprecedented ventures in Christian statesmanship and Kingdom extension.

"Give us the young"—

Benjamin Kidd may have overstated his case in *The Science of Power* but his philosophy is, nevertheless, increasingly the guiding principle of state and community. It will become likewise that of the church, unless she shall choose deliberately to muddle along with her traditional belated policy. With the improvements in her leadership and program which have been suggested, however, the church organizing her energies around a great educational program will be prepared to meet Benjamin Kidd's challenge:

"If the incoming generation of men were submitted to a new collective inheritance, including in particular its psychic elements, they would take it up as readily as they did the old. We should then have the surprising spectacle of a great change in the world, appearing to the observer as if a fundamental alteration in human nature had suddenly taken place on a universal scale.

* * * * *

"There is no ideal in conformity with the principles of civilization dreamed of by any dreamer or idealist which cannot be realized within the lifetime of those around him."

"Oh you blind leaders who seek to convert the world by labored disputations! Step out of the way or the world must fling you aside. Give us the young! Give us the young and we will create a new mind and a new earth in a single generation."

Be concerned with the output
Christian conduct & personality
Learning to live the
Christian life

Teaching efficiency the fundamental factor in output

DATE DUE

268
M96

BV 1520 .M9676 1926

Munro, Harry Clyde, 1890-

How to increase your Sunday school

1

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN BV1520.M9676 1926
Munro, Harry How to increase your Sunda
3 0645 0005 8668 1